A Study of
Maria Edgeworth
By
Grace A. Oliver

Goldwin Smith.


Mrs Maria Edgeworth
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A STUDY

OF

MARIA EDGEWORTH

WITH NOTICES OF

HER FATHER AND FRIENDS

BY

GRACE A. OLIVER

AUTHOR OF "LIFE OF A. L. BARBAULD"

"The restraining grace of common-sense is the mark of all the valid minds, — of Æsop, Aristotle, Alfred, Luther, Shakspeare, Cervantes, Franklin, — the common-sense which does not meddle with the absolute, but takes things at their word, — things as they appear." — EMERSON: *Poetry and Imagination.*

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TO THE

PRINCESS HELENA KOLTZOFF-MASSALSKY,

"COUNTESS DORA D'ISTRIA,"

THIS

STUDY OF MARIA EDGEWORTH

IS DEDICATED,

AS A SLIGHT TRIBUTE OF AFFECTIONATE REGARD FOR ONE WHO HAS DEVOTED A LIFETIME TO THE LITERATURE OF THE EAST, AND THE ELEVATION OF WOMEN IN THE ORIENT,

THUS LINKING ANCIENT THOUGHT WITH MODERN PROGRESS.

PREFACE.

Happy hours of childhood passed in reading the "Parent's Assistant," "Frank," and "Early Lessons," were followed by years in which I enjoyed the Moral and Fashionable Tales. "Ennui," too, had its invaluable lesson, — that the pursuit of pleasure as an occupation can only result in misery and mental and moral destruction. As one of the thousands who have laughed at the wit and cried over the pathos of Maria Edgeworth's works, I desired to know something of the personal history of this gifted woman.

Inquiries soon revealed the fact that, there was no adequate sketch of Miss Edgeworth. Mrs. S. C. Hall had drawn a picture of her during a few days' visit at her home. Miss Julia Kavanagh had written a brief sketch for her biographies of English Women of Letters. Mr. Hayward, in preparing a review of the Memoir published by the Edgeworths, gave the longest biographical and critical sketch of her as yet attempted; but it was only a review article, not sufficient in itself to appear alone. The biographical sketches of her in magazines, etc., amounted to very little, being at best brief and meagre.

A thorough survey of contemporaneous literature gave here and there an interesting mention of Miss Edgeworth; and I have gleaned carefully what seemed of value from various sources.

Full and exhaustive criticisms of her works in the great reviews of the day, and the magazines and papers, leave nothing to be desired on that score. She was awarded a first rank in the lists of novel-writers; and, though time may have lessened the readers of her books, their influence on literature is quite evident from the constant references to her in the writings of English, American, and Continental authors.

This Study has its limitations and shortcomings; but great labor and much time have been expended on it, and an earnest desire has prompted its plan and execution, — that of offering something to the public about one of its great story-tellers.

Miss Edgeworth has been allowed to tell her own story as much as possible. Undoubtedly a much smaller book could have been made if the present style of brief biographies had been adopted; but there is still a prejudice in my mind in favor of original letters, etc. There is something personal in the touches of life so added.

I have received aid and encouragement from my family and friends during the years of work and waiting since this sketch was begun. To Mr. Justin Winsor I am indebted for the free use of the Public Library during his tenure of office, when he dispensed the treasures of that institution with a judicious and generous hospitality.

Mr. W. H. Forbes has generously given me the illustrations for the book, which are capital reproductions of the engravings and cuts done by his albertype process. The last time I ever saw my genial friend Mr. James T. Fields, his parting words were very encouraging as to my work; and he always felt a warm interest in the subject.

I must also acknowledge the kindness of W. Morris Beaufort, Esq., of London, who hunted for "The Mental Thermometer" in the British Museum Library; and also found there M. Pictet's account of his visit, and made copies of the same. To the courtesy of Miss Peabody, daughter of F. H. Peabody, Esq., I am indebted for the letter to her grandfather, which I print. Other friends have kept the subject in view, and I have been urged to continue what often seemed a very great undertaking. Mr. Avery L. Rand, of Messrs. Rand, Avery, & Co., and Mr. Cupples, of Messrs. A. Williams & Co., have interested themselves very kindly in the work, and made the details of printing and publishing as easy as possible for me.

Only those who write for the public know how difficult it is to please the general reader, how much more difficult to satisfy themselves. It has been a great pleasure and interest to study the works and survey the life of Maria Edgeworth, and I hope this may find readers among those who love the name and memory of one who consecrated her best efforts to the public good. She was one of those noble spirits who belong to all nations.

Her writings may pass out of sight, but her influence will long be felt.

These lines of our poet Stedman well describe her power: —

> "No woman's head so keen to work its will,
> But that the woman's heart is mistress still."

GRACE A. OLIVER.

"RED GABLES," SWAMPSCOTT,
October, 1882.

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A STUDY OF MARIA EDGEWORTH.

CHAPTER I.

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MANY causes have combined to prevent any one from writing the life of Maria Edgeworth; and what was not done early has become more and more difficult as years passed on. Hers was not an ordinary literary career, made up of the grinding poverty and soaring aspirations and almost insurmountable obstacles which so often, unfortunately, beset the path of genius. She was well born and bred, carefully educated, and socially surrounded by Great Britain's and Europe's best and finest minds. Her circle of intimate acquaintances, friends, and relations, takes in the very first names in politics, literature, science, and art. While her extensive view of life and society gave her breadth and ease, it in no wise detracted from her originality, her genius, or her industry.

Maria Edgeworth was Irish only in her sympathies, not her birth: for on her mother's side she was descended from an English family of long standing; and the Edgeworths, though long settled in Ireland and intermarried there, were of English origin.

It is quite impossible to write an adequate sketch of Maria Edgeworth's life, without introducing at every turn her father as a prominent factor in her literary work. He was her "guide, philosopher, and friend;" and, in order to complete the picture of her life, we must introduce some preliminary account of the Edgeworths, and give a description of the character and early life of Richard Lovell Edgeworth. Their lives were so long parallel, as she was born before he was twenty-two years old, that of necessity an account of one must constantly mention the other. Mr. Edgeworth, in writing his own memoir, which was finished after his death by Maria, says:—

"My family came into Ireland in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, about the year 1583: they had been established, as I have been told, at Edgeworth, now called Edgeware, in Middlesex.

"Edward Edgeworth, who was the bishop of Down and Connor in Ireland, in the year 1593, dying without issue, left his fortune to his brother Francis, who was the clerk of the Hanaper, in 1619. This gentleman, from whom I am lineally descended, married an Irish lady, Jane Tuite, a daughter of Sir Edmond Tuite, Knight of Sonna, in the county of Westmeath. She was very beautiful, and of an ancient family. It happened, that, being once obliged to give place at church to some lady whom she thought her inferior, she pressed her husband to take out

a baronet's patent which had been prepared for him. At this time patents were, as he expressed it, 'more onerous than honorable;' and he refused to comply with his wife's request. The lady, waxing wroth, declared that she would never go again to church. The gentleman ungallantly replied, that she might stay or go wherever she pleased. In consequence of this permission, which she took in the largest sense, she attached herself to Queen Henrietta Maria, with whom she continued in France during the remainder of the queen's life.

"Upon her husband's refusing the baronet's patent, she obtained it for her brother, Sir Edmond Tuite. She returned to Ireland afterwards, at Queen Henrietta Maria's death; but she disregarded her husband's family and her own, and laid out a very large fortune in founding a religious house in Dublin.

"Her son, Capt. John Edgeworth, married the daughter of Sir Hugh Cullum, of Derbyshire. He brought her to Ireland, to his castle of Cranallagh, in the county of Longford. He had by her one son. Before the Irish rebellion broke out, in 1641, Capt. Edgeworth, not aware of the immediate danger, left his wife and infant in the castle of Cranallagh, while he was summoned to a distance by some military duty. During his absence, the rebels rose, attacked the castle, set fire to it at night, and dragged the lady out, literally naked. She escaped from their hands, and hid herself in a furze-bush till they had dispersed. By what means she saved herself from the fury of the rebels, I never heard. She made her way to Dublin, thence to England, and to her father's house in Derbyshire. After the rebels had forced the lady out of the castle, and had set fire to it, they plundered it completely; but they were persuaded to extinguish the fire from reverence for the picture of Jane Edgeworth. Her

portrait was painted on the wainscot, with a cross hanging from her neck, and a rosary in her hands.

"Being a Catholic, and having founded a religious house, she was considered as a saint. The only son of Capt. Edgeworth was then an infant lying in his cradle. One of the rebels seized the child by the leg, and was in the act of swinging him round to dash his brains out against the corner of the castle-wall, when an Irish servant of the lowest order stopped his hand, claiming the right of killing the little heretic himself, and swearing that a sudden death would be too good for him; that he would plunge him up to the throat in a boghole, and leave him for the crows to pick his eyes out. Snatching the child from his comrade, he ran off with it to a neighboring bog, and thrust it into the mud; but, when the rebels had retired, this man, who had only pretended to join them, went back to the bog for the boy, preserved his life, and, contriving to hide him in a pannier under eggs and chickens, carried him actually through the midst of the rebel camp, safely to Dublin.

"This faithful servant's name was Bryan Ferral. His last descendant died within my memory, after having lived, and been supported always, under my father's protection. My father heard this story from Lady Edgeworth, his grandmother, and also from a man of a hundred and seven years of age, one Bryan Simpson, who was present when the attack was made on Cranallagh Castle, and by whom the facts were circumstantially detailed.

"Mrs. Edgeworth, the daughter of Sir Hugh Cullum, lived but a few years after her return to her father's house in Derbyshire. Her husband, Capt. John Edgeworth, had followed her to England. Some time after he was left a widower, he determined to return to reside in Ireland.

On his way thither, he stopped a day at Chester, it being Christmas Day. He went to the cathedral; and there he was struck with the sight of a lady who had a full-blown rose in her bosom. This lady was Mrs. Bridgman, a widow of Mr. Edward Bridgman, brother to Sir Orlando Bridgman, the Lord Keeper. As she was coming out of church, the rose fell at Capt. Edgeworth's feet. The lady was handsome, so was the captain: he took up the rose, and presented it with so much grace to Mrs. Bridgman, that, in consequence, they became acquainted, and were soon married. They came over to Ireland. Capt. Edgeworth had a son, as I have mentioned, by his former wife; and the widow Bridgman had a daughter by her former husband. The daughter was heiress to her father's property. These young people fell in love with each other. The mother was averse to the match. To avoid the law against running away with an heiress, the lovers settled that the young lady should take her lover to church behind her on horseback. Their marriage was effected. Their first son, Francis, was born before the joint ages of his father and mother amounted to thirty-one years.

"After the death of Captain Edgeworth and his wife, which happened before this young couple had arrived at years of discretion, John Edgeworth took possession of a considerable estate in Ireland, and of an estate in England, in Lancashire, which came to him in right of his wife; he had also ten thousand pounds in money, as her fortune. But they were extravagant, and quite ignorant of the management of money. Upon an excursion to England, they mortgaged their estate in Lancashire, and carried the money to London in a stocking, which they kept on the top of their bed. To this stocking, both wife and husband had free access; and, of course, its contents soon began to be very low. The young man

was handsome, and very fond of dress. At one time, when he had run out all his cash, he actually sold the ground plat of a house in Dublin, to purchase a high-crowned hat and feathers, which was then the mode. He lived in high company in London and at court. Upon some occasion King Charles II. insisted on knighting him. His lady was presented at court, where she was so much taken notice of by the gallant monarch, that she thought it proper to intimate to her husband that she did not wish to go there a second time; nor did she ever after appear at court, though in the bloom of youth and beauty. She returned to Ireland. This was an instance of prudence, as well as strength of mind, which could hardly have been expected from the improvident temper she had shown at first setting out in life. In this lady's character there was an extraordinary mixture of strength and weakness. She was courageous beyond the habits of her sex in real danger, and yet afraid of imaginary beings. According to the superstition of the times, she believed in fairies. Opposite to her husband's castle of Lissard, in Ireland, and within view of the windows, there is a mount, which was reputed to be the resort of fairies; and, when Lady Edgeworth resided alone at Lissard, the common people of the neighborhood, either for amusement, or with the intention of frightening her away, sent children by night to this mount, who, by their strange noises, by singing, and the lights they showed from time to time, terrified her exceedingly. But she did not quit the place. The mount was called Fairy-mount, since abbreviated to Firmount."[1]

[1] Firmount: from which, in after times, the Abbé Edgeworth (celebrated as attending Louis XVI. on the scaffold, to whose branch of the family this part of the estate descended) called himself M. de Firmont. The abbé was Lady Edgeworth's grandson. Her fifth son, Essex Edgeworth, was the abbé's father.

Of the courage and presence of mind of this Lady Edgeworth, who was so much afraid of fairies, Mr. Edgeworth gives an instance.

"While she was living at Lissard, she was, on some sudden alarm, obliged to go at night to a garret at the top of the house for some gunpowder, which was kept there in a barrel. She was followed up-stairs by an ignorant servant-girl, who carried a bit of candle without a candle-stick between her fingers. When Lady Edgeworth had taken what gunpowder she wanted, had locked the door, and was half-way down-stairs again, she observed that the girl had not her candle, and asked her what she had done with it: the girl recollected, and answered, that she had left it '*stuck in the barrel of black salt.*' Lady Edgeworth bid her stand still, and instantly returned by herself to the room where the gunpowder was, found the candle as the girl had described, put her hand carefully underneath it, carried it safely out, and, when she got to the bottom of the stairs, dropped on her knees, and thanked God for their deliverance. This lady, with all her courage and virtue, had a violent temper, which brought on family quarrels between her and her husband and her many sons: so that the very early marriage which I have mentioned turned out unhappily. She recurred continually to the large fortune which she had brought her husband, and complained of being treated with neglect. Her husband had learned prudence, however, and managed to push his fortunes as a courtier and soldier, and to leave to his eight sons a handsome property. Lady Edgeworth lived till she was ninety."

Francis Edgeworth, her eldest son, was the grandfather of Richard Lovell Edgeworth.

"He was a loyal man, a zealous Protestant; so much so, that he was called *Protestant Frank*. In his youth he raised a regiment for King William, which, when he had completed, he gave up to his father, Sir John, who required it from him. A memorandum of an intended grant from the crown, of three thousand pounds, on account of the expense of raising this regiment, and as an acknowledgment for the service, still remains (unpaid) among our family papers. My grandfather became colonel of the regiment after his father's death. He was a man of great wit and gayety, fond of his profession, quite a soldier, and totally regardless of money. He married successively several wives, one of whom, an English lady, was a widow Bradstone. Her daughter, Miss Bradstone, my father's half-sister, married Thomas Pakenham, father to the first, and grandfather to the present, Lord Longford. Thus he became connected with the Pakenham family. Col. Francis Edgeworth, besides being straitened in his circumstances, by having, for many years, a large jointure to pay to his mother, was involved in difficulties by his own taste for play, — a taste which, from indulgence, became an irresistible passion. One night, after having lost all the money he could command, he staked his wife's diamond earrings, and went into an adjoining room where she was sitting in company, to ask her to lend them to him. She took them from her ears, and gave them to him, saying, that she knew for what purpose he wanted them, and that he was welcome to them. They were played for. My grandfather won upon this last stake, and gained back all he had lost that night. In the warmth of his gratitude to his wife, he, at her desire, took an oath that he would never more play at any game with cards or dice. Some time afterwards he was found in a hay-yard with a friend, drawing straws

out of the hay-rick, and betting upon which should be the longest. As might be expected, he lived in alternate extravagance and distress; sometimes with a coach and four, and in very want of half a crown."

Col. Francis Edgeworth left his affairs in such disorder at his death, "that his son, the father of Richard Lovell Edgeworth, then a child of eight years old," would have lost his whole property, had not Mr. Pakenham, his guardian, taken care of him and of it. Mr. Pakenham, finding his half-nephew to be an "uncommonly steady disposition, advised him to go to the Temple, at eighteen, instead of going to college. This prudent counsel he followed, and there applied himself closely to the study of the law; and by perseverance in his profession, and making himself" master of his own affairs, he recovered a considerable part of his estate, which had been unjustly detained from him by some of his own family. His son relates "a singular detection of fraud in one of the suits in which he was engaged. A deed was produced against him, which was witnessed by a very old man, who was brought into court. His venerable aspect prepossessed the court strongly in favor of his veracity. He said that he was an ancient servant of the Edgeworth family, and had been accustomed to transcribe papers for the gentleman who had executed the deed. He began by declaring, that he had foreseen from the particular circumstances of the deed, which went to disinherit the heir of the family, that the transaction might hereafter be brought into dispute: he had therefore, he said, privately put a sixpence under the seal of

the deed, which would appear if the seal were broken. The seal was broken in open court, and the sixpence was found to be dated five years subsequent to the date of the deed: the deed being thus proved to be a forgery, my father gained his suit."

The readers of "Patronage" must remember how much the point of that story depends upon this very anecdote, which Maria has introduced as the evidence on which the fortunes of Mr. Percy turned in the nefarious attempt of Sir Robert Percy to deprive him of the *mesne* rents, after he had dispossessed him of his estates by an earlier suit. The finding of the coin there restores him his entire estate, and the whole passage is one of those genuine bits of real life which she depicts with so much truth and vividness.

Mr. Edgeworth, after this incident, and gaining other suits, became rich in a few years; and, "in 1732, he married Jane Lovell, daughter of Samuel Lovell, a Welsh judge, who was son of Sir Salathiel Lovell, that recorder of London who, at the trial of the seven bishops, in the reign of James II., proved himself to be a good man, though he was but an indifferent lawyer. He lived to the age of ninety-four, and had so much lost his memory as to be called the *Obliviscor* of London. Of him I have heard my father relate an anecdote," says Richard Lovell Edgeworth, "which has been told of others. A young lawyer pleading before him was so rude as to say, 'Sir, you have forgotten the law.' He replied, 'Young man, I have forgotten more law than you will ever remember.'"

In Galton's "Hereditary Genius" he mentions the Edgeworths, and classes them as an example of his theory. He also names Sir Salathiel Lovell as an ancestor. In naming Mr. Edgeworth, the father of Maria, he says, he exhibits "a singular union of sober sense and inexhaustible invention."

Samuel Lovell, the Welsh judge, as he was passing the sands near Beaumoris, "going the circuit," was overtaken by the night and the tide: his coach was set fast in a quicksand; the water soon rose into the coach; and his register and some other attendants crept out of the windows, and mounted on the roof and on the coach-box. The judge let the water rise to his very lips, and with becoming gravity replied to all the entreaties of his attendants, "I will follow your counsel, if you can quote any precedent for a judge's mounting a coach-box."

After Mr. Edgeworth's marriage with Miss Lovell, he abandoned the profession of the law, and resided on his estate in Ireland, with occasional visits to England. He had eight children, four of whom died in their early infancy. Richard Lovell Edgeworth was born in Bath, in the year 1744. When he was six years of age, he became, by the death of his elder brother Thomas, his father's heir. He tells us that as the result of this event, —

"The views of my education changed, and my life was now to be preserved with an increased degree of care and precaution. . . . I was naturally strong and active; but I was now obliged to take a course of physic twice a year, every spring and autumn, with a nine days' potions of small-beer and rhubarb, to fortify my stomach, and

to kill imaginary worms. I was not suffered to feel the slightest inclemency of the weather; I was muffled up whenever I was permitted to ride a mile or two on horseback before the coachman; my feet never brushed the dew, nor was my head ever exposed to the wind or sun. Fortunately my mother's knowledge of the human mind far exceeded her skill in medicine."

This lady, having become a cripple by accident, after the birth of her son Richard, devoted herself to literature for her diversion and relief from *ennui;* and to her, probably, he owed the taste for science and literature which he afterwards displayed, and with which he so strongly imbued the opening mind of his daughter Maria.

Richard Edgeworth was first sent to school to the clergyman of a neighboring village, the Rev. Patrick Hughes, the early instructor of Goldsmith. After a few months of preparatory study there, combined with a good deal of whipping, he was ready for a higher school, and placed at Dr. Lydiat's at Warwick, in England. He was then about eight years old. He says of this school and the harsh treatment he received there from the older boys, —

"I had been accustomed to the affection of all my family at home, and was totally unacquainted with that love of power and of tyranny which seems almost innate in certain minds. A full-grown boy, just ready for college, made it his favorite amusement to harass the minds, and torment the bodies, of his younger school-fellows. A little boy with remarkably long flaxen hair, and myself, were the chosen objects of his cruelty. He used to knot our hair together, and drag us up and down the school-

room stairs, for his diversion. One evening, when Dr. Lydiat and all the boys except my tormentor and myself, had gone to church, he caught me, and, confining me with iron grasp between his knees, he pulled a small black box from his pocket, which, with a terrific voice and countenance, he informed me was filled with dead men's fat, with the fat of a man who had lately been hanged: this he invited me to eat; and, upon my refusing to do so with manifest signs of horror and disgust, he crammed my mouth till I was nearly suffocated. The box contained, it is true, nothing but spermaceti; but to me it was dreadful as poison."

Travelling in England in 1752 was at all seasons difficult, but in winter a great exposure. And as the Edgeworth family were living at Bath, the boy was to spend his Christmas holidays at school. Mrs. Dewes, the sister of Mrs. Delany, so well known to all who have ever read the life of that charming woman, was herself all benevolence and sympathy; and, on a visit to her own sons at the school, saw little Richard, and invited him to Welsbourne, her home, which was about four miles from Warwick. There he went, and passed a very delightful Christmas. His mother had known Mrs. Delany; and he found himself received by the master and mistress of Welsbourne as one of the family, and saw old English hospitality. His description of it all shows what country life in England was at that time.

"The tenants of Mr. Dewes were invited to a Christmas dinner of excellent cheer, and their wives and daughters passed the evening in mirth and *unreproved pleasure*. The fiddle and a good supper sent all the

young people happy to their homes, and Mrs. Dewes's cheerful and instructive conversation spread universal satisfaction among the elder part of the company."

The four Dewes boys and young Edgeworth passed their time very pleasantly in the usual sports of the season, and read in the evening from the little books then printed by Newberry in St. Paul's Churchyard, or deciphered anagrams which Mrs. Dewes and some young lady visitors gave them.

Mrs. Delany, writing Mrs. Dewes from Bulstrode, the home of the Duchess of Portland, Dec. 2, 1753, says, among other things, —

"I am delighted with your journal, and that Master Edgeworth is so well-behaved a child: it would have been indeed grievous to have had your great good-nature and humanity hurt and ungratefully returned, as it would have been had he proved *a bad boy.*"

After an attack of whooping-cough, which prevented his study, he was removed from the school at Warwick. On his way with his father to Bath, he says, —

"Our journey lay in some places out of the high road, and across corn-fields. Our vehicle was a two-wheeled carriage, something like a French *chaise de poste;* and, as we travelled slowly, I had time for observation. I recollect, however, only one thing that caught my attention: when we came on the high road to Cirencester, I saw a man carrying a machine five or six feet in diameter, of an oval form, and composed of slender ribs of steel. I begged my father to inquire what it was. We were

told that it was the skeleton of a lady's hoop. It was furnished with hinges, which permitted it to fold together in a small compass, so that more than two persons might sit on one seat of a coach; a feat not easily performed when ladies were encompassed with whalebone hoops of six feet extent."

On his parents' return to Ireland, he was placed at Drogheda school; of which Dr. Norris was master, and it was then considered the best in Ireland. While there he profited by the excellent instruction, and made some lifelong friends. Among them were the two sons of Chief Baron Foster: John, the eldest, became afterwards the celebrated speaker of the Irish House of Commons; and William, who was successively Bishop of Kilmore and Bishop of Clogher. While at this school, Edgeworth became celebrated for feats of strength; and, during his vacations, he was invited by Baron Foster to visit his sons at Collon, where he hunted "desperately" with the Fosters. Thinking he had some cause of grievance, Richard persuaded his father to remove him when he was about fourteen years old to a school at Longford, kept by a man named Hynes; and so well did he profit by his studies, that in two years more he was prepared to enter the University of Dublin.

About this time (1754) his mother, who had long been an invalid, consulted Lord Trimblestone, "a Roman-Catholic nobleman who had resided many years abroad, and become famous for his skill in medicine and benevolent attentions to persons of all ranks who applied to him." Mr. Edgeworth relates

the following anecdote of one of this nobleman's remarkable cures.

"A very delicate lady of fashion, who had, till her beauty began to decay, been flattered egregiously by one sex, and vehemently envied by the other, began to feel, as years approached, that she was shrinking into nobody. Disappointment produces *ennui*, and *ennui* disease: a train of nervous symptoms succeeded each other with alarming rapidity; and after the advice and the consultations of all the physicians in Ireland, and the correspondence of the most eminent in England, this poor lady had recourse in the last resort to Lord Trimblestone. He declined interfering, he hesitated: but at last, after much intercession, he consented to hear the lady's complaints, and to endeavor to effect her cure: this concession was made upon a positive stipulation that the patient should remain three weeks in his house, without any attendants but those of his own family, and that her friends should give her up entirely to his management. The case was desperate, and any terms must be submitted to where there was a prospect of relief. The lady went to Trimblestone, was received with the greatest attention and politeness. Instead of a grave and forbidding physician, her host, she found, was a man of most agreeable manners. Lady Trimblestone did every thing in her power to entertain her guest, and for two or three days the demon of *ennui* was banished. At length the lady's vapors returned: every thing appeared changed. Melancholy brought on a return of alarming nervous complaints, — convulsions of the limbs, perversion of the understanding, a horror of society: in short, all the complaints that are to be met with in an advertisement enumerating the miseries of a nervous patient. In the midst of one of her most

violent fits, four mutes, dressed in white, entered her apartment; slowly approaching, they took her without violence in their arms, and without giving her time to recollect herself, conveyed her into a distant chamber hung with black, and lighted with green tapers. From the ceiling, which was of a considerable height, a swing was suspended, in which she was placed by the mutes, so as to be seated at some distance from the ground. One of the mutes set the swing in motion; and, as it approached one end of the room, she was opposed by a grim menacing figure armed with a huge rod of birch. When she looked behind her, she saw a similar figure at the other end of the room, armed in the same manner. The terror, notwithstanding the strange circumstances which surrounded her, was not of that sort which threatens life; but every instant there was an immediate hazard of bodily pain. After some time the mutes appeared again, with great composure took the lady out of the swing, and conducted her to her apartment. When she had reposed some time, a servant came to inform her that tea was ready. Fear of what might be the consequences of a refusal prevented her from declining to appear. No notice was taken of what had happened, and the evening and the next day passed without any attack of her disorder. On the third day the vapors returned, the mutes re-appeared, the menacing flagellants again affrighted her; and again she enjoyed a remission of her complaints. By degrees the fits of her disorder became less frequent, the ministration of her tormentors less necessary; and in time the habits of hypochondriacism were so often interrupted, and such a new series of ideas was introduced into her mind, that she recovered perfect health, and preserved to the end of her life sincere gratitude for her adventurous physician."

Before young Edgeworth entered the university, his attention was turned from his studies for a time by the festivities attending his eldest sister's wedding. She married Francis Fox, Esq., of Fox Hall, in the county of Longford, a gentleman of good family and fortune, living near Edgeworthstown. All kinds of gayety followed this event, and Richard Edgeworth was among the wildest participants in these jovial scenes. It was at one of the dances given in honor of the wedding that the mock-marriage occurred, which sufficiently alarmed his father, and caused him to institute a suit of *jactitation of marriage* in the ecclesiastical court, to annul these imaginary nuptials. The whole affair was a joke, and hardly worth noticing, any more than other boyish freaks, such as dancing, hunting, and shooting so violently that for three nights successively Richard went from one amusement to another without being in bed; and it was after a *raking pot of tea* — that Hibernian potation taken to refresh the spirits of those who have sat up all night — that this wedding ceremony was gone through, with a key of a door for a ring, and a "few words of the ceremony gabbled over" by one of the company, with a white cloak round him for a surplice. When "The Quarterly Review," long years after, sent forth that cruel notice of the Memoirs which so hurt Maria and the Edgeworth family, this incident was commented on in the most severe language by the reviewer. That gentleman actually counted this as a marriage, and added it to Mr. Edgeworth's four marriages as another. The young lady married shortly afterwards.

A change for the better in the active boy's tastes was made by the good influence of Lady Longford, wife of the Lord Longford who was nephew of Richard's father. His cousin's wife was the worthy companion of this nobleman, who was a man of "superior abilities and politeness." She was a woman gifted by nature with talents, wit, and humor, to which she added a taste for literature not common in the women of her day. She did not try to thwart her young cousin in his passion for field-sports, but gave him the key of the library; and this hint soon had the desired effect, for he shot till he was tired of it, and then found the library a most attractive place. His taste for field-sports vanished, never to return. His active mind was early roused to an interest in science; and the electrical machine of the traveller Mr. Deane — whose wife Mrs. Edgeworth interested herself in when her son was seven years old — made a lasting impression on his mind. This philosopher was detained at Edgeworthstown by his wife's illness; and, grateful for the kindness of Richard's mother to her, he showed him, while he was on a visit to Dublin, his workshop and all his scientific instruments. Among other things, he allowed him to see an orrery which he was making. This machine he afterwards bequeathed to the University of Dublin.

One feels some doubt as to the wisdom with which Lord Longford allowed young Edgeworth to win a hundred guineas at faro, and then lose it all again, to try his disposition, and see if he were in danger of becoming a gambler.

The usual career of a young man of property was at that day either idleness, which always has so many dangers, or a profession; and this latter seems to have been Richard's lot. He was entered at Dublin University, 1761; and there he passed an extremely idle, misspent period of his life. He himself wishes "to pass over" his residence there. His father removed him in 1761 to Corpus Christi College, Oxford, as a gentleman commoner. He resolved to amend his life, and seems to have thoroughly regretted the dissipations of Dublin.

Another danger awaited him. Mr. Elers, an early friend of Mr. Edgeworth, was requested by him to take an interest in his son while at the university. Mr. Elers frankly told Mr. Edgeworth that he had "several daughters grown and growing up, who, as the world said, were pretty girls, but to whom he could not give fortunes that would make them suitable matches for Mr. Edgeworth's son." This honorable statement did not prevent, but rather hastened and determined, Mr. Edgeworth's resolution; and he took his son with him to Black Bourton, an ancient seat of the Hungerford family, whose heiress Mr. Elers had married. As Mr. Edgeworth did the very thing Mr. Elers feared (fell in love with and married one of his pretty daughters who had no fortune), some mention must here be made of the occupants of Black Bourton.

Paul Elers was of German descent, and a lawyer by profession. He was requested by Mr. Grosvenor, a friend of his whom Mr. Hungerford had selected as his daughter's husband, to visit Black Bourton,

and examine the title-deeds of the estate, and take the necessary steps to secure it to him. Mr. Grosvenor was not fascinated by his intended bride, and Black Bourton did not seem to yield attractions to compensate. He grew melancholy, and told Mr. Elers "The girl is a sad encumbrance to the estate." His friend felt differently, and spoke so admiringly of Miss Hungerford, that Mr. Grosvenor replied, "A thought has just struck me: suppose you were to take the whole bargain off my hands." After some preliminaries, this strange change was actually effected: Mr. Elers became the husband of the heiress, and Mr. Grosvenor "returned with light heart to London, delighted at his escape" from matrimony; and his friend became the possessor of an estate of eight hundred a year, and the lady. His prospects as a rising lawyer were, however, spoiled by this marriage; and he was, at the time of Mr. Edgeworth's introduction to the home, father of a large family, and poor.

"The family at Black Bourton, at this time," says Mr. Edgeworth, "consisted of Mrs. Elers, her mother Mrs. Hungerford, and four grown-up young ladies, besides several children; the eldest son, an officer, absent on duty. The young ladies, though far from being beauties, were handsome; and, though destitute of accomplishments, they were, notwithstanding, agreeable, from an air of youth and simplicity, and from an unaffected good-nature and gayety. The person who struck me most at my introduction to this family group was Mrs. Hungerford. She was near eighty, tall and majestic, with eyes that still retained uncommon lustre. She was not able

to rise from her chair without the assistance of one of her grand-daughters; but when she had risen, and stood leaning on her tortoise-shell cane, she received my father, as the friend of the family, with so much politeness, and with so much grace, as to eclipse all the young people by whom she was surrounded.

"Mrs. Hungerford was a Blake, connected with the Norfolk family. She had formerly been the wife of Sir Alexander Kennedy, whom Mr. Hungerford killed in a duel in Blenheim Park. Why she dropped her title in marrying Mr. Hungerford, I know not; nor can I tell how he persuaded the beautiful widow to marry him, after he had killed her husband. Mr. Hungerford brought her into the retirement of Black Bourton,[1] the ancient seat of this family, — an excellent but antiquated house, with casement windows, divided by stone frame-work, the principal rooms wainscoted with oak, of which the antiquity might be guessed by the tarnish it had acquired from time. In the large hall were hung spears, and hunting-tackle, and armor, and trophies of war and of the chase, and a portrait — not of exquisite painting — of the gallant Sir Edward Hungerford. This portrait had been removed hither from Farley Castle, the principal seat of the family.

"In the history of Mrs. Hungerford, there was something mysterious, which was not, I perceived, known to the younger part of the family. I made no inquiries from Mr. Elers, but I observed that she was for a certain

[1] The proper name of Black Bourton is Bourton Abbots. "The old manorial pew belonging to the Dean and Chapter of Christ Church College formerly belonged to the Ellers, or Elers, family. At the back of it is the old family marble tomb and effigy. Bourton Abbots was a fine old mansion-house, a vestige of which is not now to be found, though relics of the old oak carvings are scattered among neighboring cottages."

time in the day invisible. She had an apartment to herself above stairs, containing three or four rooms; when she was below stairs, we used to make a short way from one side of the house to the other, through her rooms, which occupied nearly one side of a quadrangle, of which the house consisted. One day, forgetting she was in her room, and her door by accident not having been locked, I suddenly entered. I saw her kneeling before a crucifix, which was placed upon her toilette, her beautiful eyes streaming with tears, and cast up to heaven with the most fervent devotion; her silver locks flowing down over her shoulders; the remains of exquisite beauty, grace, and dignity in her whole figure. I had not, till I saw her at these, her private devotions, known that she was a Catholic; nor had I, till I saw her tears of contrition, any reason to suppose that she thought herself a penitent. The scene struck me, young as I was, and more gay than young: her tears seemed to comfort, not to depress her; and, for the first time since my childhood, I was convinced that the consolations of religion are fully equal to its terrors."

The young man found himself unseen by the lady, and quietly withdrew with the lesson he learned from this scene.

Richard received an unlimited invitation to the hospitable mansion at Black Bourton, and soon became as one of the family. He "laughed and talked, and sang with the ladies, and read Cicero and Longinus with their father, who, notwithstanding my youth," says the narrator, "and my propensity to female society, filled many of my hours with agreeable conversation." His college life was

passed very much the same as the other students spent theirs; and he distinguished himself neither by his levity nor studiousness, though he made good progress under his excellent tutor, Mr. Russell, whose son, some years later, was Master of the Charter House.

CHAPTER II.

Visits his Parents at Bath.—Runaway Marriage.—Receives his Father's Forgiveness.—Visits Ireland with his Wife.—Death of his Mother.—Return to England.—Settles at Hare Hatch.—Occupations.—His Wife's Management.—Son born.—Enters the Temple, and studies for the Bar.—Maria born.—Mr. Edgeworth's Visit to Lichfield.—The Lichfield *Coterie*.—Dr. Darwin.—Anna Seward.—The Misses Sneyd.—Thomas Day.—Other Friendships formed with Mr. Keir, Dr. Small, Mr. Watt, Mr. Wedgewood, and Mr. Bolton.—Day's Admiration for Miss Honora Sneyd.—Her Rejection.—Transfers his Affections to her Sister Elizabeth.—He adopts Two Girls.—Mr. Edgeworth inherits his Paternal Estates.—He becomes desperately in Love with Miss Honora Sneyd.

During the vacations he went to Bath, where his mother and father were living on account of the former's health. Bath, at this period, was the resort of England's most distinguished men and women; and young Edgeworth became a man of fashion, and at the same time philosophized upon the people he met there. He says he "was particularly struck with the appearance of the then Duke of Devonshire. He had retired from the court in disgust; and the chagrin visible on his countenance made me early perceive that the smiles or frowns of princes have more power over the happiness of human beings than those who are at a distance from sovereigns can conceive." He saw Beau Nash, then at the zenith of his fame, the imperious ruler of fash-

ion in Bath, at whose command no lady might appear as she chose, no man could be admitted to a public assembly without conforming to the dictates of this petty tyrant, who denounced aprons, and forbade boots in his evening assemblies, and in person addressed those who wilfully or ignorantly disobeyed his rules. There, too, he saw "the celebrated Lord Chesterfield," and "looked in vain for that fire which we expect to find in the eye of a man of wit and genius. He was obviously unhappy, and a melancholy spectacle."

Mr. Edgeworth thought his son should marry early, and introduced him among the best families in Bath; but already he had paid attention to one of the Miss Elers, and he says, "felt myself insensibly entangled so completely that I could not find any honorable means of extrication." He did not conceal his change of feeling when he returned to Black Bourton, but found the lady, who was not so changeable, held him to his promise, and so they visited Scotland, in 1703, where minors were married when they contracted an alliance without their parents' consent. At the time of this injudicious marriage with Miss Anna Maria Elers, Richard Lovell Edgeworth was but nineteen years old; and his eldest child, a son, was born before the father was twenty years of age. His father, Mr. Edgeworth senior, was much displeased at this marriage, and at first refused his approbation, but finally gave his consent to what he must have felt a thing he could not remedy, and had the young couple remarried by license with his consent. Richard Edgeworth

took his young wife and infant son to revisit his parents in Ireland; but his mother only survived his arrival at Edgeworthstown a few days, ending her life of suffering with the fortitude and calmness she had displayed throughout her long illness. Her son bears ample testimony to her many admirable qualities and her love of literature; which she kept in spite of early discouragements, and cherished by constant exercise in reading and study, so that, during her twenty years of helpless invalidism, she did not want for objects of interest and thought.

"I believe I have mentioned, that, a few hours after my birth, she, by some mismanagement, lost the use of one arm, and almost of her left side. . . . In a word, her health was most deplorable. Yet, under all these afflictions, she was cheerful, and had the full use of her excellent understanding. Literature was not the fashion of the times when she was young. My grandmother, as I have been informed, was singularly averse to all learning in a lady, beyond reading the Bible, and being able to cast up a week's household account. By what accident my mother acquired an early and a decided taste for knowledge of all sorts, I never heard; but her application and perseverance were probably stimulated by the preventive measures that my grandmother took to hinder her from *wasting time* upon books.

The year passed by Mr. Edgeworth at his father's estate in Ireland was extremely distasteful to him. He read "some law and more science."

He made himself an orrery with the few tools he had, and began that course of busying himself with such pursuits which engrossed all his thoughts till

his children's education in some measure occupied his time, and Maria's literary tastes gave him another field for that active and restless spirit which was the ruling and motive power of his life. He was unfortunate in being an only son and the inheritor of a good estate; for his temperament was one particularly suited to active life, and the largest scope allowed him by the life of a country gentleman did not amount to that which a professional career would have afforded him. He endeavored to occupy himself well always, but only succeeded in busying himself with trifling inventions and some writing. These we shall notice later; for the time we speak of he says, —

"I never passed twelve months with less pleasure or profit. . . . I felt the inconveniences of an early and hasty marriage; and, though I heartily repented my folly, I determined to bear with firmness and temper the evil which I had brought on myself."

In the autumn of 1765 the young couple returned to England, and on their journey stopped for a few days at Chester, where Mrs. Edgeworth's aunts resided. There Mr. Edgeworth first heard of Dr. Darwin,[1] whose acquaintance he was soon to make, through a congeniality in pursuits which led him to introduce himself to Dr. Darwin. This he did in order to show him a new coach he had invented, on hearing that Dr. Darwin had arranged one to turn in a small compass without the incumbrance of a crane-neck perch.

[1] Erasmus Darwin, an English physician, known to fame as poet and botanist. Born, 1731; died, 1802.

Mr. Edgeworth says, —

"From Chester I went to Black Bourton, where I found the family in great distress. Mr. Elers was, by the malice of an enemy, confined for debt. Meantime Mrs. Elers was left to manage as well as she could at Black Bourton, and to take care of a number of helpless children, some of whom were but seven or eight years old."

They resided several months with Mrs. Elers; and Mr. Edgeworth endeavored to give his wife's younger brothers and sisters some instruction, and to cheer Mrs. Elers. He at last found it necessary to leave Black Bourton, and establish himself in a home of his own. He took a house at Hare Hatch, between Reading and Maidenhead, in Berkshire, where the young couple began to live by themselves. Mr. Edgeworth made his son an allowance; and, as he had several terms to keep before he could be called to the bar, economy was necessary. Their modest establishment "was on a very moderate footing. I kept a phaeton with a pair of ponies, a man who took care of them and of the garden, one man and two maid servants. By the good economy of my wife we lived comfortably. She superintended the care of the garden, which, under her management, was always productive."

The neighboring people were wealthy, and simple in their mode of life and thoughts. Card-playing was the usual evening entertainment, and presently Mr. Edgeworth found himself engaged in mechanical and scientific studies by himself for want of society of the kind he enjoyed. Smiths and carriage-build-

ers were, with a workshop of his own, a great resource; and he visited their shops frequently. It was not till many years later that he became more interested in general literature, and then ventured on authorship. His hobby was scientific and mechanical studies. When it became necessary for him to keep terms at the Temple, he was obliged to live in London more or less; and there he became intimate with his brother-in-law, Capt. Elers, who lived much with his aunts, the Misses Blake, in Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury.

In 1767 Mr. Edgeworth was making experiments in telegraphing at Hare Hatch, and also trying experiments of various kinds with carriages. He resided at Hare Hatch, with the exception of short visits to friends, till he again went to London to complete his terms at the Temple. While he was experimenting in telegraphing, trying flying carriages, and visiting his friends in London, who found him a very agreeable companion, his second child was born, Jan. 1, 1767.

This child was MARIA EDGEWORTH, whose birth in her grandfather's house at Black Bourton undoubtedly pleased her parents and relations; but they could hardly have realized that before her death her name would be known and respected throughout the world where the English language and literature were understood, and a love of learning and pure morality appreciated. The early years of Maria's life were passed largely at Black Bourton with her grandparents, and at Hare Hatch with her mother and father. Mr. Edgeworth was not a bad husband; but he has

left unequivocal testimony to the fact, that his home was most uncongenial to him, both in direct statement and in inference from his frequent absences from home. He says, —

"My wife was prudent, domestic, and affectionate; but she was not of a cheerful temper. She lamented about trifles; and the lamenting of a female, with whom we live, does not render home delightful."

But he thinks he lived at home more than was usual with men of his age and time. He was absent, however, very much; visiting London often, and occasionally Birmingham. Of his visit to Ireland with his young son and Mr. Day, some account must be given; as well as that visit made to Lichfield, where he was introduced to that celebrated *coterie* of which Dr. Darwin was the great man, and Miss Anna Seward[1] the queen. There he met Miss Honora Sneyd, the adopted sister of Miss Seward, who expatiates on her growing charms in many a verse, and laments her death with mournful numbers, more filled with genuine feeling than with poetic fire. Mr. Edgeworth's first visit to Lichfield occurred curiously enough. He had heard of Dr. Darwin's success in constructing a famous phaeton upon a new principle; namely, "that in turning round, it continued to stand upon four points nearly at equal distances from each other; whereas in carriages with a crane-neck, when the four wheels are locked under the perch, the fore carriage is very unsteady, being supported upon only three points."

[1] Anna Seward. Famous in her day as a poetess. The friend and biographer of Dr. Darwin. 1747–1809.

Mr. Edgeworth, acting upon this hint, made himself a very handsome phaeton; and, upon its being approved by the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, he told the society whence he derived his plan for making it, and wrote also to Dr. Darwin. The doctor, though he thought him a coachmaker, wrote him a very civil answer, and invited him to visit him at Lichfield.

The visit of Mr. Edgeworth to Lichfield was attended with results of vital importance to his future happiness, as we shall see in the course of our narrative. His first introduction to Dr. Darwin was oddly made. He reached his house, to find him out, but was hospitably received by Mrs. Darwin, who invited him to supper. Presently Dr. Darwin arrived, bringing with him a drunken man whom he had found nearly suffocated in a ditch; and, when this gentleman was viewed by candle-light, it was found that he was Mrs. Darwin's brother. They took it very coolly, but assured Mr. Edgeworth that this was the first time he had ever been intoxicated in his life.

"During this scene I had time to survey my new friend, Dr. Darwin," says Mr. Edgeworth. "He was a large man, fat and rather clumsy; but intelligence and benevolence were painted in his countenance. He had a considerable impediment in his speech, a defect which is in general painful to others; but the doctor repaid his auditors so well for making them wait for his wit or his knowledge, that he seldom found them impatient."

After some conversation, and a little evident surprise at finding Mr. Edgeworth at supper with his

wife, "Why! I thought" said the doctor, "that you were only a coachmaker!" — "That was the reason," said I, "that you looked surprised at finding me at supper with Mrs. Darwin. But you see, doctor, how superior in discernment ladies are even to the most learned gentlemen: I assure you that I had not been in the room five minutes before Mrs. Darwin asked me to tea."

In Galton's "Hereditary Genius," he says Dr. Darwin "sprang from a lettered and intellectual race, as his father was one of the earliest members of the Spaulding Club."

One listener gives a description of his conversation which will amuse the reader. He was talking about the Calmia flower, which it turned out afterwards he had never seen.

"It is a flower of such exquisite beauty that it would make you waste the summer's day in examining it: you would forget the hour of dinner, all your senses would be absorbed in *one*, — you would be all *eye*." I smiled, and asked him to describe it. "What, in the first place, was its color?" — "Precisely that of a seraph's plume." We laughed, as he intended we should, at the *accuracy* of the description. He told us afterwards that he had heard much of the flower, but as yet had not seen it."

The doctor was pleased to find in the maker of the phaeton an intelligent and well-informed gentleman, and the next day introduced him to some literary people, among whom was Miss Anna Seward.

"How much of my future life," he exclaims, "has depended upon this visit to Lichfield! . . . . Miss

Seward was at this time in the height of youth and beauty, of an enthusiastic temper, a votary of the Muses, and of the most eloquent and brilliant conversation. Our mutual acquaintance was soon made, and it continued to be for many years of my life a source of never-failing pleasure.

"It seems that Mrs. Darwin had a little pique against Miss Seward, who had, in fact, been her rival with the doctor. These ladies lived upon good terms; but there frequently occurred little competitions, which amused their friends, and enlivened the uniformity that so often renders a country town insipid. The evening after my arrival, Mrs. Darwin invited Miss Seward, and a very large party of her friends, to supper. I was placed beside Miss Seward; and a number of lively sallies escaped her, that set the table in good-humor. I remember — for we frequently remember the merest trifles which happen at an interesting period of our life — that she repeated some of Prior's 'Henry and Emma,' of which she was always fond; and, dwelling upon Emma's tenderness, she cited the care that Emma proposed to take of her lover, if he were wounded: —

> 'To bind his wounds, my finest lawns I'd tear,
> Wash them with tears, and wipe them with my hair.'

"I acknowledged that tearing her finest lawns, even in a wild forest, would be a real sacrifice from a fine lady; and that washing wounds with salt water, though a very severe remedy, was thought to be salutary; but I could not think that wiping them with her hair could be either a salutary or an elegant operation. I represented, that the lady, who must have had by her own account a choice of lawns, might have employed some of the coarse sort for this operation, instead of having recourse to her hair.

I paid Miss Seward, however, some compliments on her own beautiful tresses; and at that moment the watchful Mrs. Darwin took this opportunity of drinking *Mrs. Edgeworth's health.* Miss Seward's surprise was manifest. But the mirth this unexpected discovery made fell but lightly upon its objects; for Miss Seward, with perfect good-humor, turned the laugh in her favor. The next evening the same society re-assembled at another house, and for several ensuing evenings I passed my time in different agreeable companies in Lichfield."

The following stanzas were written on the window of the George Inn, at Lichfield, by the Rev. W. B. Stevens of Repton, Derbyshire. They were sent by Anna Seward to the ladies of Llangollen.

I.

"Fair city! lift, with conscious glory crowned,
The spiry structure of thy Mercian state;
While History bids her ancient trump resound
How War, in wrath, unbarred thy blood-stained gate.

II.

Not that the praise of ancient days alone
Is thine, fair city, blest through every age:
War's scythèd car, yon miracles of stone,
Bow to the splendors of thy lettered page.

III.

Here Johnson fashioned his elaborate style;
And Truth, well pleased, the moral work surveyed;
Here, on her darling's cradle wont to smile,
Thalia with her Garrick fondly played.

IV.

And here the flower of England's virgin train,—
Boast of our isle, Lichfield's peculiar pride,—
Here Seward caught the dew-drops for her strain
From grief and pity's intermingled tide.
Exult, fair city! and indulge the praise
A grateful stranger to thy glory pays."

During this visit to Lichfield, Mr. Edgeworth made many pleasant acquaintances and friends. There and then he met the lady destined to be his second wife, Miss Honora Sneyd. Mr. Seward, who was a canon of Lichfield Cathedral, as well as rector of Eyam in Derbyshire, was a man of learning and taste, fond of society, and very amiable. His many good qualities drew around him a circle of warmly attached friends; and his residence, the bishop's palace at Lichfield, was the resort of the cultivated people of the neighborhood. Mrs. Seward was a worthy wife to this excellent man, and seconded him in his good works. Under her care Miss Honora Sneyd, the daughter of Edward Sneyd, Esq., was brought up and educated. Mr. Sneyd became a widower in early life, and his relations and friends were anxious to alleviate his loss by taking charge of his five daughters. Mrs. Seward, with her daughters Anna and Sally, had the care of Honora; who acquired an ardent love of literature and an elevated taste from the influence and training of Miss Anna Seward.

The foibles of Anna Seward were many, but she had a clear head and a warm heart. Early flattery, and the distinction paid her in a *coterie* like that of Lichfield, were injurious; and her egotism and vanity

were increased to the detriment of her finer qualities. When Mr. Edgeworth first met her, Miss Seward was not an acknowledged authoress; nor was it till 1782 that her first poetical romance of Louisa was published. All her works show a superabundance of language and epithet, and her later writings are almost unreadable from the gushing sentimentalism with which they abound. She was an industrious and scholarly writer: says herself of her habits in a sonnet, —

> "I love to rise ere breaks the tardy light,
> Winter's pale day."

The verbose and extravagant pen of Miss Seward described the advent of Richard Lovell Edgeworth at Lichfield, in her life of Dr. Darwin, thus: —

"About the year 1765, came to Lichfield, from the neighborhood of Reading, the young and gay philosopher, Mr. Edgeworth, a man of fortune, and recently married to an Elers of Oxfordshire. The fame of Dr. Darwin's various talents allured Mr. Edgeworth to the city they graced. Then scarcely two and twenty, and with an exterior yet more juvenile, he had mathematic science, mechanic ingenuity, and a competent portion of classical learning, with the possession of the modern languages. His address was gracefully spirited, and his conversation eloquent. He danced, he fenced, and winged his arrows with more than philosophic skill; yet did not the consciousness of those lighter endowments abate his ardor in the pursuit of knowledge."

She was once talking about two brilliant spirits of different sexes with Mr. Edgeworth, when he

exclaimed, "If that man and woman were to marry, they would skim the moon!"

She writes of Mr. Day, —

"He was less graceful, less amusing, less brilliant than Mr. Edgeworth, but more highly imaginative, more classical, and a deeper reasoner."

To return to Mr. Edgeworth's life at Hare Hatch: he there made and perfected several machines, for which he received a gold and silver medal from the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, etc. At this time (that is, shortly after his return to Hare Hatch from Lichfield, where he met Dr. Darwin and his friends), Mr Edgeworth made the acquaintance of several men who were celebrated for their talents and taste. Among these were Mr. Keir of Birmingham, Mr. Bolton, Mr. Watt, Mr. Wedgwood, Dr. Small, and last, but not least, must be named Mr. Thomas Day.[1]

"This mutual intimacy has never been broken but by death, nor have any of the number failed to distinguish themselves in science or literature. Some may think that I ought with due modesty to except myself.

"Mr. Keir, with his knowledge of the world, and good sense; Dr. Small, with his benevolence and profound sagacity; Wedgwood, with his unceasing industry, experimental variety, and calm investigation; Bolton, with his mobility, quick perception, and bold adventure; Watt, with his strong inventive faculty, undeviating steadiness, and unbounded resource; Darwin, with his imagination, science, and poetical excellence; and Day, with his un-

[1] Thomas Day, a poet and miscellaneous writer, author of the well-known story of Sandford and Merton. 1748–89.

wearied research after truth, his integrity and eloquence, — formed altogether such a society as few men have the good fortune to live with: such an assemblage of friends as fewer still have had the happiness to possess, and keep through life."

"The Linnæan Society of the Midland Counties was well known once," says Galton in his "Hereditary Genius." Wall, Bolton, and Darwin were the chief notabilities. There is frequent allusion to a man whose name alone remains, but who appeared to exercise a marked effect on his associates, Dr. Small.

The extraordinary man who sought Mr. Edgeworth's friendship, and for twenty-three years was his most intimate and esteemed friend, was at this time a student at Oxford, and lived at Barehill, in Berkshire. He was of the same college as Mr. Edgeworth, and had his tutor. Mr. Edgeworth and Mr. Day had many points of common interest; and "to the day of his death," he writes, "we continued to live in the most intimate and unvarying friendship, — a friendship founded upon mutual esteem between persons of tastes, habits, pursuits, manners, and connections totally different. A love of knowledge, and a freedom from that admiration of splendor which dazzles and enslaves mankind, were the only essential points in which we entirely agreed." This eccentric young gentleman could not have been at all prepossessing in appearance: "he seldom combed his raven locks, though he was remarkably fond of washing them in the stream." Full of contradiction, he scorned — or affected to scorn — love,

and delighted, even in the company of women, to descant on the evils brought upon mankind by love: he used, after enumerating a long and dismal catalogue, to exclaim with the satiric poet, —

> "These, and a thousand more we find:
> Ah! fear the thousand yet unnamed behind."

With all his eccentricities, Mr. Day was amiable and virtuous; and though he affected to scorn beauty in women, and was determined not to marry, yet his life was made up of philosophy, and most unphilosophical attempts to marry. Mrs. Edgeworth took a strong dislike to Mr. Day, and her husband says this "jealousy was a source of great uneasiness to me." Mr. Day made a visit to Ireland with Mr. Edgeworth after he had known him a year or two, and there wished to marry his sister, Margaret Edgeworth, who listened to his proposal, but seemed not to feel very warmly towards her admirer. He had entered the Temple; and she was prevailed upon to acknowledge, that if in a year's time he should continue in the same mind, and improve his manners, she might be induced to reward him by her hand. Miss Edgeworth studied metaphysics, which Mr. Day had recommended her; but she did not find encouragement in her study, and gave up both her lover and her studies, not long after, to marry Mr. John Ruxton of Black Castle, a gentleman who was in the army, but soon after left it. Mr. Day, who was much chagrined by his rejection, was no wise daunted by it, and then put his extraordinary project into execution of educating himself a wife. He selected

for this purpose two orphan girls from the foundling hospital, of the ages of eleven and twelve. One, the first he took, was apprenticed without Mr. Edgeworth's knowledge to him, as it was necessary that the girl should be thus bound to some *married* man. His visit to France for the purpose of secluding these girls from *all* influences but his own became rather monotonous, and he returned in 1769.

The second girl, after Mr. Day's return from his visit, was found by him either "invincibly stupid," or perhaps not disposed to follow his eccentric arrangements. On Mr. Day's return, after he had parted with the unruly girl, he took a house at Stow Hill, near Lichfield, and began there to devote himself anew to the education of Sabrina Sidney.

It was after his settling himself at Stow Hill, that Mr. Edgeworth spent the Christmas of 1770 with him. In the year 1769, while Mr. Edgeworth was still at Hare Hatch, his father's health failing suddenly, he was called to Ireland; and he found him in Dublin, suffering under the disease of which he died in his seventieth year. Mr. Richard Edgeworth was a man of excellent character, and highly respected by all who knew him. For twenty-five years he sat in the Irish parliament. He was twice offered and declined the baronetage; to which he had a claim as ancient as James the First, when a patent was prepared for Francis Edgeworth, clerk of the Hanaper.

By Richard Edgeworth senior's death a material difference was made in his son's affairs. He succeeded to an estate which was sufficiently large to

relieve him from the necessity of following a profession; and he was not called to the bar, though he had completed his terms.

It was during Mr. Edgeworth's Christmas visit at Lichfield in 1770, that he began to see the "superiority of Miss Honora Sneyd's capacity."

"Her memory was not copiously stored with poetry, and, though no ways deficient, her knowledge had not been much enlarged by books; but her sentiments were on all subjects so just, and were delivered with such blushing modesty (though not without an air of conscious worth), as to command attention from every one capable of appreciating female excellence. Her person was graceful, her features beautiful, and their expression such as to heighten the eloquence of every thing she said. I was six and twenty; and now, for the first time in my life, I saw a woman that equalled the picture of perfection which existed in my imagination. I had long suffered from the want of that cheerfulness in a wife, without which marriage could not be agreeable to a man of such a temper as mine. I had borne this evil, I believe, with patience; but my not being happy at home exposed me to the danger of being too happy elsewhere."

In short, Mr. Edgeworth, who certainly was remarkable for his power over all his family and friends in impressing them with his strength of character, had great eccentricities and peculiarities; and he is reported to have said, "I am not a man of prejudice: I have had four wives; the second and third were sisters, and I was in love with the second in the lifetime of the first." On this Christmas visit his fate was sealed; and his home, already distasteful

to him, became still more unattractive. Miss Honora Sneyd is the lady whose connection with Major André[1] is made the subject of a note by Miss Seward in her "Monody on the Death of Major André."

In this note Miss Seward asserts that Mr. André, in despair upon Miss Sneyd's rejection, entered the army. He certainly *was* deeply attached to the lady; but the parents on both sides discouraged the match from prudential motives, as Mr. André had no fortune. Mr. Edgeworth attempts to disprove the fact that Major André was engaged to Miss Sneyd, and thinks it very strange that Miss Seward should "insinuate" that he was jilted by her; but the dates he brings to prove that Major André entered the army two years before Miss Sneyd married him have no special value.

Mr. Edgeworth says, —

"Mr. André appeared to me pleased and dazzled by the lady. She admired and estimated highly his talents, but he did not possess the reasoning mind which she required."

George Augustus Sala undoubtedly thought Miss Seward's opinion the true version of the case; for, in a sketchy article in "Belgravia" some years since, he said of Major André, —

"He was bred to commercial pursuits; but he abandoned the pen for the sword, and obtained a commission in the line. He rose to the rank of major, and to fill the high post of adjutant-general to the British army in

[1] André, John, born in England, 1749. Was hung as a spy in America, Oct. 2, 1780.

America. He was personally as beautiful as Raphael. He was learned and accomplished, painted admirably, drew caricatures, wrote charming verses; and his epistles to Honora Sneyd (whom he failed to win, and who married a kind of madman, and died early) are among the most charming love-letters in our language. . . . It is true that he had been jilted by a woman, but time and employment are the best of Roman cements to mend a broken heart withal."

Mr. Edgeworth would have been annoyed by hearing himself described as a "kind of madman."

Miss Seward says of the attachment between André and Honora Sneyd, —

"All the dark color of André's fate took its tint from disappointed and unconquerable attachment to her."

In alluding to Honora's feeling, she says it was "a mere compound of gratitude and esteem." Col. Barry, who succeeded Major André as adjutant-general to the British forces in America, wrote Miss Seward of Honora, that she was "the only woman he had ever seriously loved, that he never beheld a being in whom the blending charms of mind and person could approach the lustre of those which glowed in the air, the look, the smile, the glance, and the eloquence of Honora Sneyd." Miss Seward calls her "*my* Madame de Grignan." She says of this young lady, —

"To the varying glories of her countenance, when she was expressing her *own*, or listening to the effusions of genius, no pencil could do justice."

In Miss Seward's poem, written in 1772, called "Time Past," she says, —

"Affection, friendship, sympathy, — your throne
Is winter's glowing hearth; and ye were ours.
Thy smile, HONORA, made them all our own:
Where are they *now?* Alas! their choicest flowers
Faded at thy retreat; for thou art gone.
And many a dark, long eve I sigh alone,
In thrilled remembrance of the vanished hours,
When storms were dearer than the balmy gales,
And winter's bare, bleak fields, than green luxurious vales."

She addressed Sonnet IV. to Honora Sneyd, "whose health was always best in winter," — in May, 1770, — and tells her she prizes less the beauties of spring than "drear winter's naked hedge and plashy field," because these please Honora.

Miss Seward tells a story of "an awkward, pedantic youth, once resident for a little time at Lichfield. He was asked if he liked Miss Honora Sneyd. 'Almighty powers,' replied the oddity, 'I could not have conceived that she had half the face she has!' Honora was finely rallied about this imputed plenitude of face." The fair Honora probably was the cause of unsettling Major André's mind, if nothing more; and she effectually disturbed the equanimity of Mr. Day, who also took it into his head to fall in love with her, and wrote her, finally, after several months of courtship, an enormous packet containing a plan of the life he wished to lead, and a proposal of marriage, in which he pointed out to her the folly of living in the world, and wished her to retire from it with him. He intrusted this

packet to Mr. Edgeworth, who had so far suppressed his own feelings as to visit Lichfield with his family, to try and overcome his secret attachment to Miss Sneyd. Mr. Day, who had combated his apparently hopeless attachment, and written him a letter of good advice, now asked Mr. Edgeworth to be his ambassador to Miss Sneyd. Mr. Edgeworth says, "I delivered it, with real satisfaction, to Honora;" but whether it was because it would set at rest his friend's pretensions or not, is uncertain. Mr. Day had for Miss Sneyd's sake sent Sabrina Sydney to school. He was destined to a severe disappointment. Miss Sneyd "would not admit the unqualified control of a husband over all her actions: she did not feel that seclusion from society was indispensably necessary to preserve female virtue, or to secure domestic happiness." And she declined leaving her mode of life "for any dark and untried system." This was a blow to Mr. Day, who was really ill for some days, and took to his bed; where Dr. Darwin bled him, and administered with his philosophical reflections "to that part of him most diseased, — his mind." In a few weeks the lover's mind was diverted by the appearance of Miss Elizabeth Sneyd at Lichfield.

Mr. Edgeworth says of this meeting, —

"I had introduced archery as an amusement among the gentlemen in the neighborhood, and had proposed a prize of a silver arrow, to be shot for at a bowling-green, where our butts had been erected. All the ladies who frequented the amusements of Lichfield were assembled;

and Miss Seward appeared with her usual sprightliness and address, accompanied by Honora.

"We had music and dancing: some of the gentlemen fenced and vaulted and leaped; and the summer's evening was spent with as much innocent cheerfulness as any evening that I can remember. Miss Elizabeth Sneyd and her father came among us in the middle of our amusements. Just as a country dance was nearly ended, Miss Honora Sneyd introduced me to her sister, desiring me to dance with her, to prevent her being engaged by some stranger, with whom they might afterwards not choose to form an acquaintance. Miss Elizabeth Sneyd was, in the opinion of half the persons who knew them, the handsomest of the two sisters: her eyes were uncommonly beautiful and expressive, she was of a clear brown and of a more healthy complexion than Honora. She had acquired more literature, had more what is called the manners of a person of fashion, had more wit, more vivacity, and certainly more humor, than her sister. She had, however, less personal grace: she walked heavily, danced indifferently, had much less energy of manner and of character, and was not endowed with, or had not then acquired, the same powers of reasoning, the same inquiring range of understanding, the same love of science, or, in one word, the same decisive judgment, as her sister.

"Notwithstanding something fashionable in this young lady's appearance, Mr. Day observed her with complacent attention. Her dancing but indifferently, and with no symptom of delight, pleased Mr. Day's fancy; her conversation was playful, and never disputatious, so that Mr. Day had liberty and room enough to descant at large and at length upon whatever became the subject of conversation."

This lady claims our interest; for she became Mr. Edgworth's third wife in course of time, in defiance of law and "prejudice." Mr. Sneyd, who had hitherto lived in London, assembled all his daughters to live with him at Lichfield; and Miss Elizabeth, who had till then lived with Mr. and Mrs. Henry Powys (of the Abbey), Shrewsbury, was the next object of Mr. Day's attention. She, on her part, was struck by Mr. Day's eloquence; and she listened well (a great attraction) while he "descanted at large and at length upon whatever became the subject of conversation." His educating a young girl for his wife, "his unbounded generosity, his scorn of wealth and titles, his romantic notions of love, — which led him to think, that, when it was mutual and genuine, the rest of the world vanished, and the lovers became all in all to each other, — made a deep impression upon her." In short, his heart was caught at a rebound; and Elizabeth had made more impression in three weeks upon Mr. Day than her superior sister had in twelve months.

CHAPTER III.

Mr. Day and Mr. Edgeworth visit France, accompanied by Young Richard. — Richard's Education. — Residence in France. — Employment there. — Mrs. Edgeworth's Death. — Mr. Edgeworth returns to England. — Second Marriage. — Maria goes to Ireland with Mr. and Mrs. Edgeworth. — Life there. — They return to England. — Mr. Day's Marriage. — Mr. Edgeworth's Irish Journey. — Mrs. Edgeworth's Illness. — Maria sent to Boarding-School. — Mrs. Edgeworth's Death. — Maria's First Literary Work. — Her Removal to a London Boarding-School.

Mr. Day's regard for Honora Sneyd died with her rejection. Mr. Edgeworth's "former admiration returned with unabated ardor." The more he "compared her with other women, the more he was obliged to acknowledge her superiority." Honora herself "conversed with me with freedom," he says, "and seemed to feel that I was the first person who had seen the full value of her character. Miss Seward shone so brightly, that all objects within her sphere were dimmed by her lustre." She was, however, generous and noble-minded, and showed and felt only gratification at seeing her dear young friend admired so strongly by their new friend. Mr. Day alone knew the intense feeling with which Mr. Edgeworth regarded this charming creature, and he used all his philosophy to represent to him the danger of allowing himself to think of Miss Sneyd at all. Mr. Edgeworth himself knew that there was

but one certain method of escaping such dangers, — "flight;" and he resolved upon going to France. Mr. Day, who, meanwhile, had been convinced by Elizabeth Sneyd that "he could not with propriety abuse and ridicule talents in which he appeared deficient," such as riding well, dancing gracefully, and the other accomplishments, thought he would go with his friend, and make himself worthy of his new lady-love. She, meantime, put herself through a course of reading, and promised not to go to London, Bath, or any other public places of amusement, till his return.

Mr. Edgeworth, with a mixture of his usual *sang-froid* and philosophy, endeavored to persuade himself and all his friends that he felt no more than common esteem for Honora: he took every opportunity of declaring his intention of living on his Irish estates on his return, and of persuading her that "young women who had not large fortunes, should not disdain to marry," even if they could not find heroes. "Honora listened, and assented;" and they left England and the ladies, to try France. They were accompanied by Richard, Mr. Edgeworth's eldest child. This boy Mr. Edgeworth had determined, shortly after his birth at Black Bourton in 1764, to educate according to the system of Rousseau. He says, —

"His 'Émile' had made a great impression upon my young mind, as it had done upon the imaginations of many far my superiors in age and understanding. His work had then all the power of novelty, as well as all the charms of eloquence; and when I compared the many

plausible ideas it contains, with the obvious deficiencies and absurdities that I saw in the treatment of children in almost every family with which I was acquainted, I determined to make a fair trial of Rousseau's system. My wife complied with my wishes, and the body and mind of my son were to be left as much as possible to the education of nature and of accident. I was but twenty-three years old when I formed this resolution: I steadily pursued it for several years, notwithstanding the opposition with which I was embarrassed by my friends and relations, and the ridicule by which I became immediately assailed on all quarters.

"I dressed my son without stockings, with his arms bare, in a jacket and trousers such as are quite common at present, but which at that time were novel and extraordinary. I succeeded in making him remarkably hardy; I also succeeded in making him fearless of danger, and, what is more difficult, capable of bearing privation of every sort. He had all the virtues of a child bred in the hut of a savage, and all the knowledge of *things* which could well be acquired at an early age by a boy bred in civilized society. I say knowledge of *things*, for of books he had less knowledge at seven or eight years old than most children have at four or five. Of mechanics he had a clearer conception, and, in the application of what he knew, more invention, than any child I had then seen. He was bold, free, fearless, generous: he had a ready and keen use of all his senses and of his judgment. But he was not disposed to *obey:* his exertions generally arose from his own will; and though he was what is commonly called good tempered and good natured, though he generally pleased by his looks, demeanor, and conversation, he had too little deference for others, and he showed an invincible dislike to control. With me, he was always what I

wished; with others, he was never any thing but what he wished to be himself. He was, by all who saw him, whether of the higher or lower classes, taken notice of; and by all considered as very clever. I speak of a child between seven and eight years old; and, to prevent interruption in my narrative, I here represent the effects of his education from three to eight years old, during which period I pursued Rousseau's plan."

On their journey to France, Mr. Edgeworth took with him the boy, leaving Mrs. Edgeworth and two little girls behind, Maria and Emmeline. Mr. Edgeworth passed nearly two years in France; most of the time being spent at Lyons, where he exercised his engineering skill in constructing a bridge for wheelbarrows across a ravine, and a kind of ferry-bridge, — both to be used in the work of diverting the Rhone into a new channel in order to enlarge the city.

When Mr. Edgeworth found that his work was likely to engage him for some months, he sent for his wife, whom he had left at Black Bourton with her father and sisters. Accompanied by one of her sisters, she accordingly went to Lyons, and spent some months; but at the beginning of the winter, being tired of French society, and anxious to be in England, where she had left her children, she returned to Black Bourton under the care of Mr. Day, who went home to claim as the reward of his labors the hand of Elizabeth Sneyd.

On Mr. Day's return to England, he found that Miss Sneyd could not feel for him the attachment which he had hoped, could not give him her heart;

and so for that time he was again disappointed in his matrimonial views. Miss Sneyd is reported to have said she preferred "Thomas Day *blackguard* to Thomas Day *gentleman*."

In the course of the next few years, he found himself strongly interested in his ward Sabrina Sydney, and would undoubtedly have married her but for an unfortunate circumstance. She had become an interesting and attractive woman, and was much attached to her benefactor. He had in every way felt satisfied with her conduct, till a trifling occurence annoyed him inexpressibly, and he at once abandoned all idea of making her his wife. He had left her at the house of a friend, under strict injunctions as to some peculiar fancies of his own: among these were some requests as to her dress. She *was* or was *not* to wear a certain style of sleeves and handkerchief then in vogue; and he considered her acting negligently in this respect as a mark of her want of attachment to him, and as a proof of her want of strength of mind; and so he at once and decidedly gave her up. Mr. Day we must leave for a time, but shall find him married at last.

Mr. Edgeworth, whom we left in Lyons, was still busied about his plans for the alteration of the bed of the Rhone, when news reached him, in March, that Mrs. Edgeworth, who had returned to England in the fall, had an infant daughter. This child (Anna) was but a few days old, when Mrs. Edgeworth died. Mr. Edgeworth immediately set out for England. The company of Lyons conferred upon him a deed of a lot of ground in the new town they

had "won from the ancient conflux of the Rhone and the Saone;" and he was also offered the ribbon of the order of St. Michael, but declined it. This property was lost at the revolution.

On Mr. Edgeworth's return to England, Mr. Day met him at Woodstock, and told him that Honora Sneyd was more beautiful than ever, and "still her own mistress," though surrounded by lovers. The magnanimity of Mr. Day was shown here, by his coming several hundred miles to assure his friend that a woman who had refused him was still as fair as, more beautiful in fact than, when she declined to leave the world and its pleasures for him. Mr. Edgeworth at once went to Lichfield, and naturally he was sure that Miss Sneyd appeared "even more lovely than when we parted." After some time, he found that Honora did reciprocate his feelings; and they were married by special license, on July 17, 1773, in the cathedral of Lichfield. Miss Seward felt some annoyance about the choice of a bridesmaid, but was on the whole glad to see her beloved Honora — whom she is never weary of celebrating in her verses — united to one so well suited to her. Though she never forgave Mr. Edgeworth, Miss Seward retained very touching recollections of Honora all her life. There are constant references to her in her poems and letters. Among the poems are several sonnets in which she refers openly to the broken intimacy between herself and her friend. She speaks in one place of "her air, her smile, — *spells* of the vanished years," — as appearing before her vision, reminding her of "days long fled, in

Pleasure's golden reign, the youth of changed Honora." There are others in which she laments the death of Mrs. Edgeworth, and hints at neglect, without venturing to name Mr. Edgeworth. In April, 1773, she addressed some verses to her, beginning, —

"HONORA, should that cruel time arise,
When 'gainst my truth you should'st my errors prize."

In Sonnet XII., written in July, 1773, the month of Honora's marriage, Miss Seward pours forth her unhappiness. Others follow in similar strain.

SONNET XII.

Chilled by unkind Honora's altered eye,
"Why droops my heart with fruitless woes forlorn,"
Thankless for much of good? What thousands, born
To ceaseless toil beneath this wintry sky,
Or to brave deathful ocean's surging high,
Or fell disease's fevered rage to mourn, —
How blest to *them* would seem *my* destiny!
How *dear* the comforts my rash sorrows scorn!
Affection is repaid by causeless hate!
A plighted love is changed to cold disdain!
Yet suffer not thy wrongs to shroud thy fate,
But turn, my soul, to blessings which remain;
And let this truth the wise resolve create:
THE HEART ESTRANGED NO ANGUISH CAN REGAIN.

JULY, 1773.

Mr. Edgeworth's son Richard entered the navy early under his kinsman Lord Longford. The care of the three girls, Maria, Emmeline, and Anna, was assumed by Mrs. Honora Edgeworth at the time of her marriage. Maria had lived much with her aunts and grandparents at Black Bourton, and passed

months with her great-aunts, the Misses Blake, in London. These old ladies were long remembered by Maria for their stately figures and dignified bearing. She was taken by them to play in the gardens at the rear of the British Museum. They lived in Great Russell Street. Maria dimly recalled her mother's death at this house, and being carried into her room for her last embrace. Whatever may have been the first Mrs. Edgeworth's deficiencies as to "cheerfulness," she appears to have been a domestic woman, — prudent, kind, and a good mother.

After Mr. Edgeworth's second marriage, he immediately took his wife to Ireland. Maria accompanied them. The house and grounds at Edgeworthstown were found to be much out of order. The house, which was built early in the eighteenth century, was arranged according to the taste of that time, and it needed modernizing and altering. Mr. Edgeworth says, —

"The grounds and gardens were in a style corresponding to the architecture. The people were in a wretched state of idleness and ignorance. We had brought with us some English servants, who soon put our domestic economy upon a comfortable footing. The axe and the plough were presently at work. The yew hedges and screens of clipped elms and horn-beam were cut down, to let in the air and the view of green fields. Carpenters and masons pulled down and built up."

"Few gentry" lived near the town, but those who did were friends and relations. Maria, being very young, remembered little of this visit, "except that she was a mischievous child, amusing herself once at

her aunt Fox's when the company were unmindful of her, cutting out the squares in a checked sofa-cover, and one day trampling through a number of hot-bed frames that had just been glazed, laid on the grass before the door at Edgeworthstown. She recollected her delight at the crashing of the glass, but, immorally, did not remember either cutting her feet, or how she was punished for this performance."

After spending three years in Ireland, Mr. and Mrs. Edgeworth returned to England, and visited their friends. They took a house at North Church in Hertfordshire, near Great Berkhampstead. Meanwhile Mr. Day was at last on the eve of matrimony. He wrote Mr. Edgeworth a long congratulatory letter on the occasion of his approaching marriage in 1773, and kept up a constant correspondence with him. In this letter, in 1773, he says he thinks he is "marked out by fate to be an old bachelor, and an humorist, destined, perhaps, to become very old, because I am very indifferent about the matter; and to buy hobby-horses for your grand-children; and perhaps, as an old friend of the family, admitted to mediate for some of the future Miss Edgeworths, when they run away with a tall ensign in the guards, or their dancing-master." A brief account of his occupations during these years may interest the reader. He had purchased chambers in the Temple, and spent there much of his time, varying his severer studies with excursions into the country when the fancy seized him.

After the rupture with Sabrina Sydney, Dr. Small proposed to his eccentric friend that he should marry

a Miss Milnes of Yorkshire, a lady whose wealth was only an adjunct to her excellent mental qualities, and whose benevolence and charity were unbounded. Her superiority of understanding was so generally admitted among her acquaintances, that "to distinguish her from another Miss Milnes, a relative of hers, who had been called *Venus*, she had acquired the name of Minerva."

All this Dr. Small reported to Mr. Day, the eccentric Cœlebs in search of a wife.

"But has she white and large arms?" said Mr. Day.

"She has," replied Dr. Small.

"Does she wear long petticoats?"

"Uncommonly long."

"I hope she is tall and strong and healthy."

"Remarkably little, and not robust. My good friend," added Dr. Small, speaking in his leisurely manner, "can you possibly expect that a woman of charming temper, benevolent mind, and cultivated understanding, with a distinguished character, with views of life congenial to your own, with an agreeable person, and a large fortune, should be formed exactly according to a picture that exists in your imagination?"

Finally this good friend persuaded the eccentric gentleman to "despise" her fortune, and take the lady, if he could achieve such a pattern of excellence; and, after a courtship of some months, Mr. Day married Miss Milnes. Shortly after their marriage he carried Mrs. Day to see the Edgeworths at Northchurch; and they found her very pleasing, and

evidently disposed to gratify her husband in all his wishes. Mr. Edgeworth says, "I never saw a woman so entirely intent upon accommodating herself to the sentiments and wishes and will of a husband;" and this feeling continued. Mr. Day, in a few months, bought a small estate called Stapleford Abbot, near Abridge in Essex. He built at this place that room without windows, which he was too indolent to rise from his chair to arrange for. He meant to cut windows in the walls afterwards, but it was never done. Before he began his work he bought at a stall, "Ware's Architecture," and, after reading it assiduously for three or four weeks, fell to building on his most extraordinary plan. Some years after, he bought another house and estate at Anningsley, near Chertsey, in Surrey, to which he removed. He thought he did prudently; because this was one of the most unprofitable estates in England, and he should have a large scope of ground for a small sum of money. Here he tried, upon a large scale, all sorts of doubtful and unprofitable experiments in farming, from books which he read on the subject, to the great injury of his fortune.

Miss Seward stated Miss Milnes's fortune at twenty-three thousand pounds. After his death she wrote the editor of "The General Evening Post," who had made some mistake about Mr. Day's property, that "it was twelve hundred pounds per annum," adding, —

"But let him be spoken of as he was, for truth is better than indiscriminate eulogium. Mr. Day, with first-

rate abilities, was a splenetic, capricious, yet bountiful misanthropist. He bestowed nearly the whole of his ample fortune in relieving the necessities of the poor; frequently, however, declaring in conversation, that there were few in the large number he fed who would not cut his throat the next hour, if their interest could prompt the act, and their lives be safe in its commission. He took pride in avowing his abhorrence of the luxuries, and disdain even of the decencies, of life; and in his person he was generally slovenly, even to squalidness. On being asked by one of his friends why he chose the lonely and unpleasant situation in which he lived, he replied, that the sole reason of that choice was, its being out of the stink of human society."

He entirely separated Mrs. Day from her relations and friends.

Mr. Edgeworth, while at Northchurch, occupied himself with mechanical pursuits; and Mrs. Edgeworth to please him "became an excellent theoretic mechanic." These pursuits, with the care of Maria and her sisters and two little ones of her own, with frequent visitors from London, kept them quite busy.

Mrs. Honora Edgeworth's health began to fail in 1778; and the preparations she was making to join Mr. Edgeworth in Ireland, whither he had been called by a lawsuit and other business connected with his estate, were given up. She met him on his return near Daventry; and, as their house at Northchurch had been let for a year, they proceeded to Mr. Sneyd's at Lichfield till they could arrange for their future manner of living.

In 1775, in consequence of Mrs. Honora Edgeworth's failing health, Maria was sent to a boarding-school kept by a Mrs. Latiffiere, at Derby. She always spoke with gratitude and affectionate remembrance of this lady. In after-life she used to mention, that she felt great admiration at hearing a child younger than herself, on the day of her admission to this school, repeat the nine parts of speech. She was more impressed by this little child's recitation than she was by any other effort of the mind afterwards. At this school, under the careful instruction of a writing-master, Maria's hand-writing was formed; and she was noted in after-years for her neat and perfect manuscripts.

Mrs. Honora Edgeworth made a great impression in Maria's mind. She early showed her sensibility and genius by appreciating that of others. She remembered always the minutest advice Mrs. Honora Edgeworth gave her. The surpassing beauty of her presence struck Maria, young as she was, at her first acquaintance with her. She remembered standing by her dressing-table, and looking at her with a sudden thought of "How beautiful!"

The beauty of Honora was of that wonderful and *spirituelle* style not destined long to adorn an earthly being, and consumption had set its fatal mark of precocious mental and physical beauty on her.

In one of Mr. Edgeworth's early letters to Mr. Day, the reader may recollect his concluding with, "You know I am no writer: my ideas do not, like yours, flow to my pen readily."

Maria wrote long after, —

"One little book, however, he and Mrs. Honora Edgeworth wrote, I believe, very early in the year 1778; when she, in teaching her first child to read, found the want of something to follow Mrs. Barbauld's Lessons, and felt the difficulty of explaining the language of all the other books for children which were then in use.

'Favete linguis —
Virginibus puerisque canto,'

was the motto of this little volume, which was the first part of 'Harry and Lucy,' — or of 'Practical Education,' as I find it called in the titlepage to the few copies which were then printed in large type for the use only of his own children. He intended to have carried on the history of Harry and Lucy through every stage of childhood; to have diffused, through natural dialogue or interesting story, the first principles of morality, with some of the elements of science and literature, so as to show parents how these may be taught, without wearying the pupil's attention.

"At the time to which I refer, the design was new; and scarcely any English writer of eminence, except Dr. Watts and Mrs. Barbauld, had condescended to write for children."

The summer was spent by Mr. and Mrs. Edgeworth at Lichfield, to be near Dr. Darwin; and, in the course of a few months, they visited Mr. Day: thence London was of easy access; and the celebrated Dr. Heberden was called by the anxious husband, but he gave him no hopes whatever of Mrs. Edgeworth's recovery. He took a small house at Beighterton, near Shiffnal, in Shropshire: so that they were near Lichfield, the Sneyds, and Dr. Darwin.

Though Mrs. Edgeworth suffered much from the consuming progress of her disease, she found time and thought for Maria, and wrote a letter from there to her, October, 1779, in which, after impressing on her "that it is vain to attempt to please a person who will not tell us what they do and what they do not desire," she continues, —

"It is very agreeable to me to think of conversing with you as my equal in every respect but age, and of my making that inequality of use to you, by giving you the advantage of the experience I have had, and the observations I have been able to make, — as these are parts of knowledge which nothing but time can bestow."

In Mrs. Honora Edgeworth's letter, which was written from Beighterton, she shows a most tender and motherly interest in Maria. In spite of evident suffering, the writer seemed to study the happiness of others. She tells Maria of her brother's being in port for a few days on leave, and speaks of other family affairs. At Mrs. Latiffier's, Maria learned to use her needle, and became very accomplished in artistic embroidery. She always enjoyed surprising her friends with little gifts of her own manufacture, and throughout her life was an adept at all womanly work. In April of 1780 a letter from her father contains thanks for an embroidered bag which she had sent her mother, who was then too ill to acknowledge her little step-daughter's remembrance. Mr. Edgeworth, in conclusion, says, —

"It would be very agreeable to me, my dear Maria, to have a letter from you *familiarly*. I wish to know what

you like and dislike. I wish to communicate to you what little knowledge I have acquired, that you may have a tincture of every species of literature, and form your taste by choice and not by chance. . . . Your poor mother continues extremely ill."

Miss Charlotte Sneyd attended her sister with devoted care. The end was very near; and in less than a month after the previous letter, Mr. Edgeworth wrote, in May, 1780, of the death of his wife. He wrote Maria a long letter, wishing to impress her with the desire of emulating the virtues of that estimable woman whose loss he was called to mourn.

MAY 2, 1780.

MY DEAR DAUGHTER, — At six o'clock on Sunday morning, your excellent mother expired in my arms. She now lies dead beside me; and I know I am doing what would give her pleasure, if she were capable of feeling any thing, by writing to you at this time, to fix her excellent image on your mind. . . . Continue, my dear daughter, the desire which you feel of becoming amiable, prudent, and of *use*. The ornamental parts of a character, with such an understanding as yours, necessarily ensue; but true judgment and sagacity in the choice of friends, and the regulation of your behavior, can be had only from reflection, and from being thoroughly convinced of what experience teaches in general too late, — that to be happy we must be good. God bless you, and make you ambitious of that valuable praise which the amiable character of your dear mother forces from the virtuous and the wise. My writing to you in my present situation will, my dearest daughter, be remembered by you as the

strongest proof of the love of your approving and affectionate father.

The desire for her father's approval, and the endeavor to live up to the standard he required, became thus early the guiding and controlling influence of Maria's life.

In the same month her father wrote her from Lichfield. He says, —

"I also beg that you will send me a little tale, about the length of a 'Spectator,' upon the subject of *Generosity:* it must be taken from history or romance, and must be sent the sennight after you receive this; and I beg you will take some pains about it."

The same subject was given at this time to a young Oxford student, then at Lichfield. When the two stories were done, they were submitted to Mr. William Sneyd, Mr. Edgeworth's brother-in-law, who was to decide on their merits. He pronounced Maria's to be very much the best; saying of it, "An excellent story, and extremely well written: but where's the generosity?" — a saying which became a sort of proverb with Maria afterwards. This was Maria's first story, and unfortunately it was not preserved. She used to say there "was in it a sentence of inextricable confusion between a saddle, a man, and his horse."

In 1780 Maria was removed from Mrs. Latiffiere's establishment to the then fashionable boarding-school of Mrs. Davis, in Upper Wimpole Street, London. Mrs. Davis treated Maria with kindness and consid-

eration, though she was "neither beautiful nor fashionable." She went through the course of tortures customary at this period, to improve the figure and carriage, — "backboards, iron collars, and dumb-bells, with the unusual additional process of being swung by the neck, to draw out the muscles and increase the growth;" a singular failure in this case, for she continued very small.

The careful instruction Maria received in the French and Italian languages at Mrs. Latiffiere's placed her ahead of her fellow-pupils in London. When she began to write the exercises required there, she found she could prepare those for the whole quarter in advance; and she kept them strung together on her desk, and, when the teacher called for the lesson of the day, she had only to take one out, and present it. This offers rather a doubtful compliment to the management of the school, where proper instruction was not arranged for more advanced pupils. Here we have a picture of her, seated "under a high ebony cabinet," during play-time, so absorbed in her book that she was "perfectly deaf" to all around; and this remarkable power of concentration and abstraction was of great service to her all through life.

She was remembered by her companions at both schools for her entertaining stories; and she learned to know what tale was most successful with her hearers, by the wakefulness it caused. These stories were told at bedtime. Many of her narrations were taken from her memory, — she devoured books while her friends played, — but very many were original.

The spirit of the *raconteur* was strong, and she had early the fertile brain of the true novelist. One which was much applauded was that of an adventurer who had a mask made of the dried skin of a dead man's face. This he put on when he wished a disguise, and he kept it hidden at the foot of a tree.

At school Maria learned to study character. She early learned in that little circle to observe peculiarities, and penetrate beneath the surface of actions for the underlying motive.

Mr. Edgeworth was essentially a utilitarian. He was a practical illustration of Bentham's theories. When he wrote the letter to his daughter, by Mrs. Honora Edgeworth's death-bed, the stress he lays upon usefulness will easily be observed. He was a busy man himself, full of projects and plans. He impressed these views on the developing mind of Maria. Mme. de Staël was reported long after to have said Maria was "lost in sad utility;" and the question naturally comes to the mind, when we see the irrepressible imagination of the young girl, just what her life would have been without her father's peculiar influence.

He checked that superabundance of sentiment which would have endangered her clearness of mind; he kept her stimulated and encouraged to write, by his advice, criticism, and approbation: but it is to be feared that he clipped the wings of fancy, and harnessed Pegasus once again, as the rustics did in an ancient myth. When she failed in her novels to inspire her characters with romantic interest, it was because the paramount influence of her father

asserted itself. She was certainly gifted with genius of a high order; but her nature was most affectionate, and long habits of respect and devotion to her father made it absolutely impossible for her to free herself from *his* views. She was always the dutiful daughter, — quite as much so to the last as at the time he wrote her of his desire for the tale on "Generosity."

CHAPTER IV.

Mr. Edgeworth's Third Marriage. — Maria's School-Life. — Visits Mr. Day in Vacation. — His Influence over her Mind. — Maria accompanies the Family to Ireland. — Edgeworthstown. — Manner of Living at that Time in Ireland. — Maria's Occupations. — Translates "Adèle et Théodore." — Writes much, without intending Publication. — Their Social Life. — Death of Mr. Day. — His Writings. — Death of Honora Edgeworth. — Mrs. Ruxton. — Her Character.

MRS. HONORA EDGEWORTH, when dying, had urged her husband to marry her sister Elizabeth. This was the young lady for whose sake Mr. Day had gallantly undergone a course of gymnastic training, and taken dancing-lessons in France. She had found, on seeing him, that she liked him less as a man of fashion than she did in his natural unpolished condition, and unceremoniously told him so. Mr. Edgeworth knew less of this sister than he did of the other Miss Sneyds, and was not particularly attracted to her. She, on her part, fancied she had an attachment for a gentleman then abroad.

About Mrs. Edgeworth's desire he writes, —

"Nothing is more erroneous than the common belief, that a man who has lived in the greatest happiness with one wife will be the most averse to take another. On the contrary, the loss of happiness which he feels when he loses her necessarily urges him to endeavor to be

again placed in a situation which had constituted his former felicity.

"I felt that Honora had judged wisely and from a thorough knowledge of my character, when she had advised me to marry again as soon as I could meet with a woman who would make a good mother to my children, and an agreeable companion to me. She had formed an idea that her sister Elizabeth was better suited to me than any other woman, and thought that I was equally suited to her. Of all Honora's sisters, I had seen the least of Elizabeth."

When Mrs. Edgeworth on her death-bed proposed this to her sister, she "expressed the strongest surprise at the suggestion, not only because I was her her sister's husband, and because she had another attachment, but independently of these circumstances: as she distinctly said, I was the last man of her acquaintance that *she* should have thought of for a husband; and certainly, notwithstanding her beauty, abilities, and polished manners, I believed she was as little suited to me."

After a few months Miss Sneyd and Mr. Edgeworth began to alter their opinions; and they were married in December, 1780, less than eight months after Mrs. Honora Edgeworth's death. The marriage was attended with some disagreeable circumstances. It was no sooner known that the parties proposed to marry than there was considerable trouble made for them. Prior to the Statutes 5 and 6, William IV., chap. 64, marriages within the Levitical degree were voidable, not void, and, if not invalidated in the lifetime of both parties, held good to all intents and purposes.

But such marriages, though not illegal under these circumstances, had become questionable, and in this case many persons interfered; and in the newspapers of the neighborhood the proposed marriage was made the subject of unpleasant remarks, and officious friends made the matter worse by replies which kept up the ill-feeling and excitement. Miss Sneyd went to visit Lady Holte in Cheshire. This lady, who was an old friend of the Sneyds, was "a woman of much knowledge of the world, and of great firmness of character." She had been Miss Elizabeth Sneyd's best friend for many years. When the parties met, early in December, in the parish church of Scarborough to be married, after being "asked three times in the parish," as was then usual, the clergyman "received a letter," says Mr. Edgeworth, "which alarmed him so much as to make me think it cruel to press him to perform the ceremony. Lady Holte took Miss Elizabeth Sneyd to Bath. I went to London with my children, took lodgings in Gray's-Inn Lane, and had our banns published in St. Andrew's Church, Holborn. Miss Elizabeth Sneyd came from Bath, and on Christmas Day, 1780, was married to me in St. Andrew's Church, in the presence of my first wife's brother, Mr. Elers, his lady, and Mr. Day."

Mr. and Mrs. Edgeworth went immediately to Northchurch, where they resided for a few months, and then went to London. Sir Joseph Banks, who was at this time president of the Royal Society, invited Mr. Edgeworth to join that body, which he did. He was still a member of the club of which

John Hunter was president. This club had no formal name. The meetings were first held at Jack's Coffee-House, and later, Young Slaughter's Coffee-House. It numbered among its members many distinguished men,—Banks, Blagden, Capt. Cook, Maskelyne, Lord Mulgrave, and many others.

In 1781, shortly after her father's third marriage, Maria had an alarming and painful inflammation of the eyes. She was taken to one of the first physicians in London, who hastily pronounced, "She will lose her eyesight." Happily this opinion of the doctor was not correct. She suffered very much: but after a time the inflammation subsided; and she was able, for many long years, to use her eyes freely for reading, writing, and all kinds of delicate needle-work and fine embroidery.

After Mr. and Mrs. Edgeworth left London, they went for the summer to Davenport Hall, which they hired of the owner. In this retired place they spent some months. At this time they had the younger children of Mr. Edgeworth with them. The magnificent seat of Sir Charles Holte, Brereton Hall, was near this place; and they passed much time very pleasantly with the Holtes at this fine old Elizabethan mansion. Meantime, Maria was still at the school of Mrs. Davis in London. Some of her holidays were spent at the house of Mr. Day. One can hardly fancy a greater contrast than that between the fashionable establishment in Upper Wimpole Street and the rigid austerity of Mr. Day's house. He was, however, kind and just; and Maria received great sympathy and attention from Mr. and

Mrs. Day at the time she suffered from the painful inflammation in her eyes. "The lofty nature of Mr. Day's mind, his romantic character, his metaphysical inquiries, and eloquent discussions took Maria into another world. The icy strength of his system came at the right moment for annealing her principles," says one observer. Mr. Day then lived at Anningsly, near Chertsey.

"His mixture of speculative misanthropy and real benevolence appeared in all his conduct. Bishop Berkeley's tar-water was still considered as a specific for all complaints. Mr. Day thought it would be of use to Maria's inflamed eyes, and he used to bring a large tumblerful of it to her every morning. She dreaded his, 'Now, Miss Maria, drink this!' but there was, in spite of his stern voice, something of pity and sympathy in his countenance which always induced her to swallow it. His excellent library was open to her, and he directed her studies. His severe reasoning and uncompromising truth of mind awakened all her powers; and the questions he put to her, and the working out of the answers, the necessity of perfect accuracy in all her words, suited the natural truth of her mind; and, though such strictness was not always agreeable, she even then perceived its advantage, and in after-life was grateful for it."

Years after this, Maria said, in describing Mr. Day's peculiarities, "*He always talked like a book*, and I do believe he always thought in the same full-dress style." M. Dumont, in writing his friend Romilly, after he had read "Sandford and Merton" for the second time, said he found "a good deal of cleverness, of talent, of the developing ideas, of pre-

paring them, and of introducing them into the minds of children." Undoubtedly this was just what Mr. Day could do and did for Maria Edgeworth at a certain period of mental growth.

By degrees her eyes recovered their strength, and the painful inflammation subsided; but it is not certain whether the tar-water, or the country air of Anningsly, effected the cure. Maria's health was always delicate, and intense headaches often troubled her. She was never equal to protracted bodily exertion, but enjoyed short walks, and in youth rode on horseback, when she had the protection of her father, being rather a timid horsewoman.

Mr. Edgeworth left traces of his mechanical ingenuity during his residence at Brereton, in the steeple clock which he amused himself with making and putting into place.

In 1782 Maria was taken from school, and accompanied her parents and younger brothers and sisters to Edgeworthstown. Her first visit to Ireland was made at an exceedingly early age. This was practically her real introduction to the scenes of her future life, the home of her fathers. She was at the age when one is apt to notice new objects and people with keen interest; and her new mode of life among the Irish quickened all her thoughts, and roused her eager and animated nature. She was very much struck by the many and extraordinary sights she saw, — the remarkable difference between the Irish and English character. The wit, the melancholy, and gayety of the Irish were all so new and strange to the young girl, accustomed to the stolid and un-

varying manners of the English servants, and the reserve and silence of the upper classes, that the penetrating genius and powers of observation of the future novelist and delineator of Irish character were vividly impressed with her new surroundings. Mr. Edgeworth wrote of their return,—

"In the year 1782 I returned to Ireland with a firm determination to dedicate the remainder of my life to the improvement of my estate, and to the education of my children, and, further, with the sincere hope of contributing to the melioration of the inhabitants of the country from which I drew my subsistence."

Of this event Maria wrote in 1819,—

"Though such a length of time has elapsed, I have retained a clear and strong recollection of our arrival at Edgeworthstown."

Then she continues,—

"Things and persons are so much improved in Ireland of latter days, that only those who can remember how they were some fifty or sixty years ago can conceive the variety of domestic grievances which in those times assailed the master of a family, immediately upon his arrival at his Irish home. Wherever he turned his eyes, in or out of his house, damp, dilapidation, waste, appeared. Painting, glazing, roofing, fencing, finishing,—all were wanting. The back yard, and even the front lawn round the windows of the house, were filled with loungers, followers, and petitioners: tenants, under-tenants, drivers, sub-agent, and agent were to have audience; and they all had grievances and secret informations, accusations, reciprocations, and quarrels, each under each, interminable.

Alternately as landlord and magistrate, the proprietor of an estate had to listen to perpetual complaints, petty wranglings and equivocations, in which no human sagacity could discover truth or award justice. Then came widows and orphans with tales of distress, and cases of oppression, such as the ear and heart of unhardened humanity could not withstand; and, when some of the supplicants were satisfied, fresh expectants appeared with claims of promises and hopes, beyond what any patience, time, power, or fortune could satisfy. Such and so great the difficulties appeared to me by which my father was encompassed on our arrival home, that I could not conceive how he could get through them, nor could I imagine how these people had ever gone on during his absence. I was with him constantly; and I was amused and interested and instructed by seeing how he made his way through these complaints, petitions, and grievances, with decision and despatch: he, all the time, in good humor with the people, and they delighted with him; though he often 'rated them roundly,' when they stood before him perverse in litigation, helpless in procrastination, detected of cunning, or convicted of falsehood. They saw into his character almost as soon as he understood theirs. The first remark which I heard whispered aside among the people, with congratulatory looks at each other, was, 'His honor, any way, is good pay.' It was said of the celebrated king of Prussia, that 'he scolded like a trooper, and paid like a prince.' Such a man would be liked in Ireland."

Modern history has hardly borne out the truth of that saying of Frederick the Great, and we must fancy it of some other royal personage; but here the Italian saying is true, "*si non è vero, il è ben trovato.*"

This long passage shows some of the difficulties felt by a new-comer at that day in Ireland, but I have quoted it more to show the way in which Mr. Edgeworth began at once to initiate Maria into business and business ways. Where most men would have felt a young girl should not be, the eccentric father felt he was teaching her some valuable lessons. She early began to keep all his accounts, and continued to act as his agent for many years. Another noticeable feature of this introduction into active life is, that it gave her great insight into the characters and ways of the Irish.

It is doubtful whether "Castle Rackrent" and her other imitable sketches of Irish life could have been written without this daily observation and study of the peculiarities of the people. They are studies from life, and that makes their merit.

Many years after this time, when Maria was describing some of her methods of working to a gentleman who asked her how she planned her novels, she spoke of seeing among other strange characters, the "King of Connemara," — first known by that and another cognomen, "*Hairtrigger* Dick," — Richard Martin, a noted land-owner of Connemara, who fought more duels than any man of his day thereabouts; and, when he brought a bill into Parliament for preventing cruelty to animals, his nickname was changed to "Humanity Martin."

She took some of this man's imperious ways and strange eccentricities to build King Corny on, in the story of "Ormond." She says of this man, that he was a contemporary of her father's; and "*too, besides,*

I once saw him, and remember my blood crept slow, and my breath was held, when he first came into the room;" and, though he was "a pale little insignificant-looking mortal," the strange stories her father had told her of him stirred her fertile imagination. She says in another place, that she saw the original of "*Thady*," in "Castle Rackrent," when she first came to Ireland; and later on we shall see how the old man's ways and character struck her, and the story all came into her mind.

Mr. Edgeworth began his improvements at home, where they were much needed. Maria says of the house at Edgeworthstown when they arrived there, that, on her father's visit with Mrs. Honora Edgeworth, it "was a tolerably good, old-fashioned mansion; but when he returned to it now with seven children, and considered it with a view to its being the residence of a large family, he felt its many inconveniences. It had been built in my grandfather's time, in a bad situation, for the sake of preserving one chimney that had remained of the former edifice. To this old chimney the new house was sacrificed, — to this, and to the fancy, formerly fashionable, of seeing through a number of doors a *suite* of apartments. To gratify this fancy, it was made a slice of a house, all front, with rooms opening into each other through its whole length, without any intervention of passage; all the rooms small and gloomy, with dark wainscots, heavy cornices, little windows, corner chimneys, and a staircase taking up half the house, to the destruction of the upper story. In short, a more hopeless case for an architect,

and for a master of a large family, could scarcely occur."

Time and prudence, however, with the mechanical taste of Mr. Edgeworth, made things gradually right; and in the course of a few years, by doing something each year, Edgeworthstown house was as commodious and pleasant a home as the heart could desire. The grounds and gardens also needed attention; and "the very day of Mr. Edgeworth's arrival he set to work, and continued perseveringly, fencing, draining, levelling, planting; though he knew that all he was doing could not *show* for years."

In this careful way of never going on too fast for his income, Mr. Edgeworth gave himself plenty to do, and yet escaped the errors of many of the Irish gentry, who either built superb mansions which involved them in debt and distress, or planned a "palace, built offices to suit, then turned stable and coach-house into their dwelling-house," "leaving the rest to fate and to their sons." Mr. Edgeworth became his own agent, with Maria's help, and had no dealings with *middlemen*, always the curse of Ireland. He was a very just landlord, and abolished many oppressive restrictions. He was one of the first Irish landlords to give up the "petty, oppressive claims of duty-work." He always left a year's rent in his tenant's hands; this being more than the *hanging gate* of six months, which many landlords would not even allow. In his selection of tenants he made no distinction as to religion or nationality, between Catholic or Protestant, or Celt and Saxon.

Maria wrote of his management, —

"As soon as my father returned to Edgeworthstown, he began to receive his rents without the intervention of agent or sub-agent. On most Irish estates there is, or there was, a sort of personage commonly called a *driver*, — a person who drives and impounds cattle for rent and arrears. Such persons, being often ill chosen, and of the lowest habits, as well as of the lowest order, misuse their authority; and frequently, unfaithful to the landlord, as well as harassing to the tenant, sell the interest of their employer for glasses of whiskey; and finish by running away with money, which they have received *on account*, or by extortion from tenants. These *drivers* are, alas! from time to time too necessary in collecting Irish rents. My father rendered this petty tyrant's authority as brief as possible. 'Go before Mr. Edgeworth, and you will surely get justice,' was the saying of the neighborhood. Besides relying on his justice, they felt with all the warmth of their warm hearts his eagerness to exert himself in the cause of the injured or oppressed. The Irish are more attached by what touches their hearts than by what concerns their interests; and those who find their way to their hearts have the best chance — I might say those only have any chance — of so far getting at their heads as to make them understand their true interests, or to cure them of any of their faults or bad habits."

Miss Edgeworth herself says of the manner in which she must have acquired much business knowledge, besides storing materials, as it has been said, for her studies of Irish life and character, —

"Some men live with their families without letting them know their affairs, and, however great may be their affection and esteem for their wives and children, think that they have nothing to do with business. This was not my

father's way of thinking. On the contrary, not only his wife, but his children, knew all his affairs. Whatever business he had to do was done in the midst of his family, usually in the common sitting-room: so that we were intimately acquainted, not only with his general principles of conduct, but with the minute details of their every-day application. I further enjoyed some peculiar advantages: he kindly wished to give me habits of business; and for this purpose allowed me, during many years, to assist him in copying his letters of business, and in receiving his rents."

This apparently tedious and drudging occupation Maria always declared she enjoyed, as a change from other work, and she showed great acuteness and aptitude for it. Years after, she took upon herself the management of her brother Lovell's affairs during a period of distress for Irish landlords, and under her management brought order out of chaos.

In the year 1782 Mr. Edgeworth proposed to Maria, after they were domesticated in their home, to prepare a translation of Mme. de Genlis's "Adèle et Théodore." He merely proposed it as a useful occupation for her leisure hours of study. But, after she had made some progress in in it, they thought of publishing it; and in December, her father wrote her from Dublin, with the corrections of her manuscripts. She had completed one volume when Holcroft's translation appeared. Neither she nor her father regretted the time spent on this volume, as it gave her ready choice of words, and that excellent practice in writing which translation or abstract from others' work always affords the young.

Mr. Day, who had a horror of female authors and their writings, was highly disgusted at Maria's having even *translated* a work on education from the French, and wrote to congratulate Mr. Edgeworth when the publication was prevented. It was from the recollection of his arguments against women's writing, and of her father's answer, Miss Edgeworth states, that "Letters for Literary Ladies" were written, nearly ten years after.

"They were not published, nor was any thing of ours published, till some time after Mr. Day's death (in 1789). Though sensible that there was much prejudice mixed up with his reasons, yet deference for his friend's judgment prevailed with my father, and made him dread for his daughter the name of authoress."

Maria wrote much during this time. Essays, plays, and little stories occupied her leisure.

At this time those who knew Maria best say she "was reserved in manner, and little inclined to converse. To those who knew her in after-years, with all her brilliant wit, in the company of the first-rate talkers of French and English society, and her never-failing cheerfulness and flow of conversation at home, this unwillingness to speak seems incredible. She was, however, then in weak health, and felt great powers which were unvalued by the young and gay of ordinary society. She knew that her father appreciated these powers, and she was contented with his approbation. She had been taken notice of by his friend Lady Holte, while in England, and thus early learned to admire high-bred manners

and high principles formed with knowledge of the world."

Maria writes of this period of her life, "As to society, we had at this time but little, except with Lord Granard's family at Castle Forbes, and with the Pakenhams at Pakenham Hall, the residence of Lord Longford. The connection and friendship which had long subsisted between the Pakenham family and ours," was mentioned, she says, by Mr. Edgeworth in his narrative. Had he continued that memoir after his return to Ireland, he would have spoken of the strong "regard he felt for Admiral Lord Longford," whose son (the inheritor of the title) was then living at home with his family, after the termination of the French and American war. Lady Longford, the wife of this earl, was a charming woman. And the Dowager Lady Longford was a woman of unusual vigor of mind, "a woman of great wit, and for her day of extraordinary knowledge and literature." She was the lady, who, in early years, inspired Mr. Edgeworth with a love of books, and drew his mind from an inordinate love of field-sports.

Lord Longford was one of her father's dearest friends, — a man of unusual ability, with a frankness and charm of manner which was most attractive. Lady Longford was a woman of romantic, enthusiastic nature; and among the children of this family was the future Duchess of Wellington, known to all her relatives as "Kitty Pakenham," and "Admiral Pakenham, with his inexhaustible wit and generous friendship, who, in his careless dress and

jovial manners, still looked and was every inch a gentleman, — these were all, not merely figures moving before Maria, as in the *raree* show of London society, but understood in the intimacy of domestic life: so that, though her girlhood was passed without ever being in what is called the 'world,' her ideas were gradually expanding, and her insight into character constantly increasing."

Pakenham Hall was a delightful home to visit at; and there she met Mrs. Greville, — the mother of Lady Crewe, and author of the ode to "Indifference," — and many people distinguished in the world of politics and literature.

Maria writes, —

"But Pakenham Hall was twelve miles distant from us, in the adjoining county of Westmeath. There was a vast Serbonian bog between us; with a bad road, an awkward fence, and a country so frightful, and so overrun with yellow-weeds, that it was aptly called by Mrs. Greville 'the Yellow Dwarf's country.'

"Castle Forbes, the residence of the Earl of Granard, was more within our reach than Pakenham Hall. There the society was various and very agreeable, especially when Lady Granard's mother (the late Lady Moira) was in the country. Lady Moira was a personage of great influence in Ireland: she held somewhat of a court at Moira House, Dublin, which was the resort of the witty and the wise of the day; and this lady, who was the daughter of Lady Huntingdon (the friend of Wesley and Whitefield), had seen a strange sort of society, and learned much not usual in people of her rank."

Maria was so happy as to attract the attention and approval of this lady; and her conversation was very beneficial to her, for she talked with the shy young girl "as one who could understand her." She says of her, —

"Lady Moira's taste for literature, general knowledge, and great conversational talents, drew round her cultivated and distinguished persons; but it was her noble, high-spirited character which struck my father still more than her acquirements and abilities.

"He was gratified by the manner in which she first encouraged and distinguished his daughter, and grateful for the friendship with which Lady Moira honored her ever after."

Mr. Edgeworth was very fond of an argument; and once, when he and Lady Moira had had a long argument on genius and education, Lord Granard ended it wittily by saying, "A pig may be made to whistle, but he has a bad mouth for it." Maria says, —

"In our more immediate neighborhood, we at this time commenced an acquaintance with a friendly and cultivated family of the name of Brooke. The father, an old, well-informed clergyman, was nearly related to the Mr. Brooke who wrote the celebrated novel of 'The Fool of Quality,' and the tragedy of 'Gustavus Vasa.' . . .

"Considering the state of society in Ireland at the time of which I am now writing, my father may be esteemed fortunate in finding in a remote place such acquaintance. In general, formal, large dinners and *long sittings* were the order of the day and night. The fash-

ion for literature had not commenced, and people rather shunned than courted the acquaintance of those who were suspected to have literary taste or talents."

Mr. Edgeworth was an excellent horseman, and always said "he could think, invent, and compose better on horseback than anywhere else:" and for many years Maria enjoyed her rides with her father; for his perfect control of his own horse gave her ease and confidence, and many pleasant hours were passed in the saddle.

In the year 1789 Mr. Day's sudden death deprived Mr. Edgeworth and Maria of a warm friend. He was her father's earliest friend; and, though full of foibles and eccentricities, he had a fine mind and remarkable powers. "There could be no second Mr. Day" for them. His loss was irreparable, and his place in their regard and esteem was never filled.

Mr. Day had left his library and his mathematical instruments to Mr. Edgeworth by his last will; but at his death this will could not be found, and an earlier one of 1780, which did not name Mr. Edgeworth, was the only one which appeared extant. Mrs. Day, who valued the friendship of Mr. Edgeworth, and said of him, that she considered him "the most purely disinterested and proudly independent of Mr. Day's friends," offered him the opportunity of naming any legacy her husband might have mentioned to him. He only asked, and received, some old mathematical instruments endeared to him by associations with his friend.

Mr. Day, it will perhaps be remembered, lost his life in attempting to train a young colt. As he did

not approve of the usual rough method of "*breaking*" horses, he undertook to manage this colt in a different way. The animal, becoming startled, plunged and threw him. "He had a concussion of the brain, never spoke after his fall, and in less than quarter of an hour expired!" Mrs. Day, who survived her husband only two years, was so inconsolable that she took to her bed; where she remained much of the time, in spite of a most philosophical letter from Mr. Edgeworth, who argued out a case from his own standpoint, and naturally fancied others of as an elastic a temperament as his own.

Maria said of Mr. Day, —

"It is remarkable that Mr. Day's fame with posterity will probably rest solely upon those works which he considered as most perishable. He valued, in preference to his other writings, certain political tracts; but these, though finely written, full of manly spirit and classic eloquence, have passed away, and are heard of no more. While his history of 'Sandford and Merton,' and even the tiny story of 'Little Jack,' are still popular. 'For the same reason, because true to nature and to genuine feeling, his poem of "The Dying Negro" will last as long as manly and benevolent hearts exist in England.'"

Miss Seward says that "The Dying Negro" was the first article in prose or verse on the wrongs of the negro. She notes this, because Cowper claims in a letter to be the first poet who "publicly stigmatized our slave-trade." Mr. Day's poem appeared in 1770, years before Cowper published at all; and it was generally read and admired. In Miss Seward's

panegyric of Mr. Dewes, she wrote in 1793 to Miss Powys, "he had the bestowing spirit of Mr. Day, without its acrimony; the politeness of Mr. Edgeworth, without his insincerity."

In Leigh Hunt's autobiography he says, —

"The pool of mercenary and time-serving ethics was first blown over by the fresh country breeze of Mr. Day's 'Sandford and Merton,' — a production which I well remember and shall ever be grateful to."

A new blow was approaching Mr. Edgeworth. Mrs. Honora Edgeworth left one daughter, at this time a lovely girl of about fifteen. This young girl inherited her mother's rare beauty, intelligence, and delicacy of constitution. Her health began to fail very rapidly. Her father wrote to Mrs. Day after her husband's death, —

"The loss of my best friend must be followed by the loss of my most excellent daughter Honora. Her ripened beauty, her cheerful, serene temper, uncommon understanding, all the hopes of her family, — by all of whom she is admired and adored, — the expectations of all who have ever seen her, must now be blasted. The hand of hereditary disease is upon her, which must soon be inevitably followed by the hand of death. With the same fortitude which her incomparable mother possessed, she bears the present, and prepares for the future."

She died in February, 1790. One observer said she was "dazzling" in beauty. Dr. Darwin, in writing Mr. Edgeworth after her death, alludes as follows to Honora: —

"I MUCH condole with you on your late loss. I know how to feel for your misfortune. The little tale you sent me is a prodigy, written by so young a person, with such elegance of imagination."

This tale of which he speaks was "Rivuletta," a fairy story written by Honora; and the reader will find it printed in "Early Lessons," by Maria. Anna Seward thanks Mrs. Powys for this tale, asks if "it be a translation or no, as it says at the end, 'Extract from Lavater.'"

After the death of Honora, Mr. Edgeworth went to Black Castle to visit his sister, Mrs. Ruxton, who was endeared to him by all the associations of early youth, and her own charms of disposition. Mr. Ruxton had rather a grave and reserved manner, but a warm heart and a keen enjoyment of humor. He delighted in Maria's company. Several of their children died young: Richard, Sophy, and Margaret were Maria's life-long friends. Black Castle was within a few hours' drive of Edgeworthstown, and a visit to her aunt was one of Maria's great pleasures. Mrs. Ruxton was a woman of wit and vivacity and strong affections. Her grace and charm of manner were such that a gentleman once said of her, "If I were to see Mrs. Ruxton sitting in rags on the doorstep, I should say 'Madam' to her."

CHAPTER V.

Maria's Method of Work. — She joins her Father and Mother in England. — Life at Clifton. — Dr. Darwin. — Mr. Edgeworth meets old Friends. — Maria visits Friends. — Dr. Beddoes. — Return to Ireland. — Disturbances in Ireland. — The "Freeman Family." — "Letters for Literary Ladies." — "Practical Education." — Continued Disturbances. — "Parent's Assistant." — At Work on "Practical Education." — "Moral Tales." — Death of Mrs. Elizabeth Edgeworth. — Friendship formed with the Beaufort Family. — Mr. Edgeworth marries Miss Beaufort.

In January, 1791, Mr. and Mrs. Edgeworth went to England, leaving Maria in charge of the house and the children.

The first story Maria wrote after that on "Generosity," was "The Bracelets:" some of the tales now in "Parent's Assistant" followed. "Dog Trusty," and "The Honest Boy and the Thief," were written at this time. She was in the habit of writing them out on a slate, and reading them to her sisters: if they approved, she copied them. At the period we are considering, she was twenty-four years old, but rather timid and doubtful of her powers. Her writing for children was the natural outgrowth of a practical study of their wants and fancies; and her constant care of the younger children gave her exactly the opportunity required to observe the development of mind incident to the age and capacity of several little brothers and sisters.

She herself says of her manner of writing her stories, —

"Whenever I thought of writing any thing, I always told my father my first rough plans; and always, with the instinct of a good critic, he used to fix immediately upon that which would best answer the purpose. '*Sketch that and show it to me.*' These words, from the experience of his sagacity, never failed to inspire me with hope of success. It was then sketched. Sometimes, when I was fond of a particular part, I used to dilate on it in the sketch; but to this he always objected. 'I don't want any of your painting — none of your drapery: I can imagine all that; let me see the bare skeleton.'"

She says, "Though publication was out of our thoughts, as subjects occurred, many essays and tales were written for private amusement." For several years Maria wrote in this way for the amusement and use of the family. Her father "would sometimes advise me," she adds, "to lay by what was done for several months, and turn my mind to something else, that we might look back at it afterwards with fresh eyes."

It would be well if all writers could restrain their pen if they did not *blot*, — which Pope calls "the last and greatest art," — waiting till time should ripen their powers, and not do as so many modern authors are in the habit of doing, — furnish the public with a book a year. Want has too often kept an over-worked brain grinding out literary productions which constantly lower the author's reputation. We recognize this fact in modern times by the inferiority of average novelists' later works. A first

book is by no means the certain harbinger of a new series. It may be the only story worthy of reading which its writer will produce. The public has ruined many of its story-tellers by urging them to write too much for their own fame and the reader's advantage.

Maria made a visit to Black Castle while her father and mother were at Clifton. She left the family in charge of a friend of the Sneyds who was at Edgeworthstown, — Mrs. Mary Powys. This lady was a devoted friend of Mrs. Honora Edgeworth; and to her she addressed the last note she wrote, in which she says Mr. Edgeworth —

> "Like a kind angel whispers peace,
> And smooths the bed of death."

After Maria's return home, her father sent for her to join him at Clifton, bringing the younger children. She travelled with four girls, two boys, and servants from Edgeworthstown to England. This rather large party of little people arrived in safety at Clifton. The landlady at one inn on the way, seeing so many nurses and little people get out of the carriage, and the quantity of baggage, exclaimed, "Haven't you brought the kitchen-grate too?" When they reached their destination, a package of guineas placed in one of the trunks was found to be light, and the friction had left a little heap of gold-dust. In 1787, when Mrs. Elizabeth Edgeworth was recovering from an illness, Mr. Edgeworth used to amuse the assembled family, by telling a story of the Freeman family. The next day Maria wrote down from memory what he had told them the previous night.

At Clifton he continued this story. In the course of time she again worked on this; and, with many alterations and additions, it became what is known as "Patronage."

The health of one of Mr. Edgeworth's sons kept the family at Clifton for quite a time. They lived there nearly two years. Maria says of her father this time, —

"This was the first time I had ever been with him away from home. In what is called *the world*, he was a most entertaining guide and companion. His observations upon characters, as they revealed themselves by slight circumstances, were amusing and just. He was a good judge of manners, and of all that related to appearance, both in men and women. . . . He did not like these two-years' residence at Clifton. The mode of life at a water-drinking place was not suited to him."

The eldest son of Mr. Edgeworth, who had left the navy, and settled in North Carolina, where he had married, made his family a visit during their stay at Clifton. Maria was very fond of him, though they had never seen much of each other. After his return to America she wrote regretting it.

The family renewed their old intimacies, and saw their friends in England easily, as Clifton was accessible. Maria saw many of her father's old friends during their residence in England. In one letter she writes, with evident pride and pleasure, that Dr. Darwin "has paid Lovell [her brother] a very handsome compliment in his lines on the Barberini Vase, in the first part of 'The Botanic Garden' which my father has just got." These are the lines: —

"The warrior Liberty, with bending sails,
Helmed his bold course to fair Hibernia's vales;
Firm as he steps along the shouting lands,
Lo! Truth and Virtue range their radiant bands;
Sad Superstition wails her empire torn,
Art plies his oar, and Commerce pours her horn."

In the footnotes to the same work, there is one describing an ingenious little automaton made out of soft fir-wood by Mr. Edgeworth: by means of its contraction and expansion, changes in the weather could be calculated. When "The Botanic Garden" came out, Mr. Edgeworth wrote to Dr. Darwin, —

"To have my name in a note to your work is, in my opinion, to have it immortal; and, as Mrs. Edgeworth says, —

'If it's allowed to poets to divine,
One-half of round eternity is mine.'"

Mr. Edgeworth did not consider Dr. Darwin's idea of poetry a correct one, — that it should be word-painting; but, when he found that he could not influence him as to his theory of writing, he proposed subjects to him which he thought could be treated by him in the manner he preferred. He urged Dr. Darwin to write a "Cabinet of Gems." Edgeworth wrote him that Maria said, "The manner in which you mention your friends in your poem shows as much generosity as your subjects show genius." Maria admired Dr. Darwin very much. She calls him "the common friend of genius and goodness, which he had the happy talent of discovering, attracting, and attaching." She mentions one of

his sayings: "A fool you know, Mr. Edgeworth, is a man who never tried an experiment in his life."

Dr. Darwin had, some years earlier (in 1781), "married a young, rich, and lovely widow,[1] who allured him to quit Lichfield, and settle at Derby." Mr. Edgeworth visited Dr. Darwin during his stay at Clifton. Maria wrote of one occasion: —

"My father has just returned from Dr. Darwin's, where he has been for nearly three weeks. They were extremely kind, and pressed him very much to take a house in or near Derby for the summer. He has been, as Dr. Darwin expresses it, 'breathing the breath of life into the brazen lungs of a clock,' which he had made at Edgeworthstown as a present for him. He saw the first part of Dr. Darwin's 'Botanic Garden:' nine hundred pounds was what his bookseller gave him for the whole! On his return from Derby, my father spent a day with Mr. Keir, the great chemist, at Birmingham. He was speaking to him of the late discovery of fulminating silver, with which I suppose your ladyship is well acquainted, though it be new to Henry and me. A lady and gentleman went into a laboratory where a few grains of fulminating silver were lying in a mortar. The gentleman, as he was talking, happened to stir it with the end of his cane, which was tipped with iron. The fulminating silver exploded instantly, and blew the lady, the gentleman, and the whole laboratory to pieces! Take care how you go into laboratories with gentlemen, unless they are like Sir Plume, skilled in the 'nice conduct' of their canes."

"Sir Plume, of amber snuff-box justly vain,
And the nice conduct of a clouded cane."

[1] Mrs. Pole of Redburn.

In another letter written about this time, Maria speaks of the "'Romance of the Forest.' It has been the fashionable novel here, everybody read and talked of it. We were much interested in some parts of it. It is something in the style of the 'Castle of Otranto;' and the horrible parts we thought well worked up; but it is very difficult to keep horror, breathless, with his mouth open, through three volumes."

Mr. Edgeworth renewed his early intimacy with Watts, Keir of Birmingham, the biographer of Mr. Day, and Wedgwood of Etruria. Besides seeing his old friends whom he visited, he went often to London, and saw his scientific friends there. Dr. Darwin at this time made him acquainted with "the ingenious, indefatigable, and benevolent Mr. William Strutt of Derby," at whose house the family often enjoyed much hospitality when they visited England. While he was making new friends, his attention was called to the sudden illness of Lord Longford; but, before he could return to Ireland to see him, news came that he was no more. He was a great loss to him.

Maria made a very pleasant visit to a former school friend, Mrs. Charles Hoare (Miss Robinson), in October, 1792. She had been a correspondent of hers, and she enjoyed much seeing her again at her pleasant home in Roehampton. Mrs. Hoare had travelled much, and Maria listened with interest to her description of foreign scenes. She wrote to her cousin, Miss Sophy Ruxton, of this visit, that she had notes half rubbed out in her pocket-book, "Sophy, slave-ship; Sophy, rope-walk; Sophy, marine

acid; Sophy, earthquake; Sophy, glass house,"—all these items of information being intended for her cousin's benefit, when next they met. Mrs. Hoare's descriptions of Lisbon and the sands of the Tagus, etc., had furnished Maria with much food for thought. A visit to London was made from Roehampton, and thence she went to visit Mrs. Powys. In July, 1793, Anna Edgeworth was engaged to Dr. Thomas Beddoes. Maria was much interested in this engagement. Anna was her youngest own sister. She says, —

"While we resided at Clifton we became acquainted with the celebrated Dr. Beddoes,[1] and it is remarkable that this acquaintance was in consequence of the doctor's great admiration for the character of Mr. Day. This had induced Dr. Beddoes to seek the acquaintance of Mrs. Day and of her friend Mr. Keir. When Dr. Beddoes came to Clifton, with the view of settling as a physician, Mr. Keir gave him a letter of introduction to my father, who was, I believe, his first acquaintance there. My father admired his abilities, was eager to cultivate his society; and, this intimacy continuing some months, he had opportunities of assisting in establishing the doctor at Clifton. In the autumn of 1793 we heard that disturbances were beginning to break out in Ireland, and my father thought it his duty to return there immediately. Our preparations for leaving Clifton seemed particularly to grieve and alarm Dr. Beddoes. During the summer's acquaintance with our family, he had become strongly attached to one of my sisters, —Anna. He had permission to follow her in the spring; and they were married at Edgeworthstown, on the 17th of April, 1794."

[1] Thomas Beddoes, distinguished physician and chemist, 1760–1808.

In writing to a friend of her sister Anna's departure, Maria tells the following anecdote: —

"Anna was extremely sorry that she could not see you again before she left Ireland: but you will soon be in the same kingdom again; and that is one great point gained, as Mr. Weaver, a travelling astronomical lecturer who carried the universe about in a box, told us. 'Sir,' said he to my father, 'when you look at a map, do you know that the east is always on your right hand, and the west on your left?' — 'Yes,' replied my father, with a very modest look, 'I believe I do.' — 'Well,' said the man of learning, 'that's one great point gained.'"

November, 1793, found the Edgeworths again at their home in Ireland, and Maria wrote about this time, "I am scratching away very hard at the 'Freeman Family' ('Patronage')."

The disturbances in Ireland, which hastened Mr. Edgeworth's return in 1793, "did not at first appear formidable," says Maria: "though we were occasionally alarmed by reports of outrages committed by *Heart-of-oak Boys* and *Defenders* in distant counties; and though in our own there were some nightly marauders, yet, upon the whole, our neighborhood continued tolerably quiet." Rumors of a French invasion continued to stir up disaffection and encourage these people. But after a time affairs became more settled, and the arts of peace flourished at Edgeworthstown; though the services of Mr. Edgeworth as justice were in active requisition for seeking, apprehending, and convicting these villains and the bands of wretches who wandered round marauding and destroying property and life.

At this time Mr. Edgeworth offered his system of telegraphing to the government. He spent some five hundred pounds upon it at his own expense. Lovell Edgeworth, by the request of Mr. Pelham, brother of the Duke of Newcastle, carried the model to London; but the government declined to avail itself of this ingenious invention. In January of 1794, William, the last child of Mrs. Elizabeth Edgeworth, was born. Mrs. Edgeworth was in very feeble health for some years before her death.

Maria was very busy at this period with several literary works. She wrote, about this time, of her "Letters for Literary Ladies," and says she is sorry that "they are not as well as can be expected, nor are they likely to mend at present. They are now disfigured by all manner of crooked marks of papa's critical indignation, besides various abusive marginal notes, which I would not have you see for half a crown sterling." She wrote in the same year to her aunt: "You are very good to wish for 'Toys and Tasks,' but I think it would be most unreasonable to send them to you now." "Toys and Tasks" was the title of one of the chapters in "Practical Education," which Maria had then begun to work upon.

"Practical Education" was suggested to Mr. Edgeworth by Dr. Darwin; for he wrote the doctor, in December, 1794, as follows: —

"EDGEWORTHSTOWN, Dec. 18, 1794.

. . . "In one of your letters some time ago, you advised us to read Dugald Stewart,[1] and to write upon education.

[1] Dugald Stewart, professor of moral philosophy in the University of Edinburgh. 1753–1828.

Stewart we have read with great profit and pleasure, and we are writing upon education. Maria recurs frequently to your authority in a chapter on 'Attention,' and has, I think (pardon my paternal partiality), managed your gigantic weapons with as much adroitness as could be expected from a dwarf. Your new terms in Zoonomia require to be mouthed frequently to make them familiar; and in conversation we sometimes forget our grammar. She would write to ask you some questions if she dared." . . .

Maria wrote about this time of the occupations of the family:—

"There is a balloon hanging up, and another going to be put upon the stocks; there is soap made and making from a receipt in Nicholson's Chemistry; there is excellent ink made and to be made by the same book; there is a cake of roses just squeezed in a vise by my father, according to the advice of Mme. de Lagaraye, the woman in black cloak and ruffles, who weighs with unwearied scales, in the frontispiece of a book, which perhaps my aunt remembers, entitled 'Chémie de Gout, et de l'Odorat.'"

A truly extraordinary catalogue of employments, and Maria might have well put some of the books in preparation into her list.

There were rumors of trouble now and then from the Defenders, and a good deal of anxiety was felt about the property in the neighborhood. Lord Granard's carriage was pelted;[1] people were robbed,

[1] During the recent agitations in Ireland, the present Lord Granard, grandson of Maria's friend, Lady Moira, was compelled to seek the aid of dragoons and constabulary. He is the head of the Catholic Union of Ireland, a resident landlord, and a patriotic Irishman. His first wife, a great heiress, was descended from one of the victims of 1798; but all this has not shielded him from annoyance.

roasted, and murdered sometimes. The *White-Tooths*, Maria explains, were men who stuck "*two* pieces of broken tobacco-pipes at each corner of the mouth to disguise the face and voice." These *White-Tooths* are often mentioned in letters of the time. She speaks of the time as "a whirlwind in our county." One of the events of the year 1795, at Edgeworthstown, was the arrival of Miss Mary and Miss Charlotte Sneyd, who made it their home after this time. Another pleasant occasion was the return of Richard Edgeworth, who made his family and home a visit in this year. He returned to America, where he died in 1796. He left several children. In April, 1795, Maria wrote of finishing "Toys and Tasks."

In the year 1795, "Letters for Literary Ladies" appeared. It was published by Joseph Johnson of St. Paul's Churchyard. This was Maria's first publication. The "Letters" contained "Letter from a Gentleman to his Friend on the Birth of a Daughter," with the answer; "Letters of Julia to Caroline;" and an essay on the "Noble Art of Self-Justification." The book was very popular, and went through several editions before 1814, and then appeared in the collected works.

These essays are admirably written; and the style is clear and forcible, though perhaps a little antiquated. The ideas and opinions are sound and well considered, and they will well repay the thoughtful reader. Their influence was very great, and for many years they were widely read and often quoted.

In 1796 Maria mentions her father doing her "the honor to let me copy his election letters," when he

failed of election as member of Parliament for Longford. In the same year, encouraged by the pleasant success of the letters, Maria published the collection of tales now known as the "Parent's Assistant." Years before, she had written many of these little stories, which are full of wit, pathos, and life. Her father named it "Parent's Friend," but Mr. Johnson has degraded it into the "Parent's Assistant;" which I dislike particularly, from associations with an old book of arithmetic, called "The Tutor's Assistant." This small volume contained "The Purple Jar," which was afterwards added to "Rosamond." The other stories were "Little Dog Trusty," "The Orange Man," "Tarlton," "Lazy Lawrence," "The False Key," "The Bracelet," "Mademoiselle Panache," "The Birthday Present," "Old Poz," "The Mimic." "Simple Susan" was not written until after this edition was printed.

In February, 1799, a little theatre was put up for the children; and in it they acted Justice Poz, from this book. Sneyd Edgeworth played the justice, "Old Poz," with great spirit.

At this time the post town of Edgeworthstown was Mullingar, fourteen miles; and the mail only went three times a week. That and high postage rates made letters very scarce and a great treat. The franking privilege was then in full vogue. At this time Maria read and was entertained with "Nature and Art" by Mrs. Inchbald, whose acquaintance she made some years after.

In 1797 Mr. Johnson wished to publish some copies of "Parent's Assistant," and make the edition

suitable for gifts. He used fine paper, and illustrated it. Miss Beaufort, daughter of Dr. Beaufort, rector of Navan, was making a visit at Edgeworthstown; and she made some designs which were used for the book, and are still to be found in some copies of this delightful little volume. Maria alludes to continuing her work on "Practical Education," in 1797, and says her father has written a chapter on "Grammar" and one on "Mechanics." She says she has been "up early for three mornings," under the pressure of work this brought.

She began at this time to write some of the stories which afterwards appear among her "Moral Tales." She designed them as a sequel to the "Parent's Assistant." She was thinking on the subject of "Irish Bulls;" though she wrote that she was not nearly ready to write the essay, and was going directly to "Parent's Assistant," meaning, probably, the tales intended as a sequel. She asked one correspondent for "any good anecdotes from the age of five to fifteen years, good latitude and longitude will suit me; and, if you can tell me any pleasing misfortunes of emigrants, so much the better. I have a great desire to draw a picture of an anti-Mademoiselle Panache, a well-informed, well-bred French governess, an emigrant." — "I am going to write a story for boys, which will, I believe, make a volume to follow 'The Good French Governess.'"

In November of 1797, Mrs. Elizabeth Edgeworth died, leaving a number of young children.

Maria says, —

"During the fifteen preceding years of which I have been giving an account, the variety of my father's employments never prevented him from attending to his great object, — the education of his children.

"He explained and described clearly. He knew so exactly the habits, powers, and knowledge of his pupils, that he seldom failed in estimating what each could comprehend or accomplish. He saw at once where their difficulty lay, and knew how far to assist, how far to urge, the mind, and where to leave it entirely to its own exertions. His patience in teaching was peculiarly meritorious, I may say surprising, in a man of his vivacity.

"The reward of his praise was delightful, it was so warmly, so fondly given. The cool by-stander might have thought that it would inspire vanity; but against this danger there was a preservative: there was mixed with the praise so much affectionate sympathy, so much parental triumph in his children's success, that affection for him was excited more than vanity for themselves; and they insensibly drew the conclusion, that affection is better worth than admiration.

"In the succeeding year my father's pursuits were all interrupted by domestic calamity. Mrs. Edgeworth's health, which had long been precarious, rapidly declined. She died in the year 1797.

"I have heard my father say, that during the seventeen years of his marriage with this lady, he never once saw her out of temper, and never received from her an unkind word or an angry look. Her solicitude and attention in the education of a large family of children were unremitting, greater than her health could bear, and such as even maternal affection would have found difficult, perhaps impossible, to sustain, unless they had been supported by attachment to a husband of superior mind.

"My father was past fifty when he was left a third time a widower, with a numerous family, four sons and five daughters living with him, some of them grown up, and some very young. Besides his children, two sisters of the late Mrs. Edgeworth resided with us. They had friends and connections in England, for whom they had high esteem and affection; yet they remained in Ireland after their sister's death, continuing to form part of a family attached to them, not only by the ties of kindred, but by the strongest feelings of love and gratitude. . . .

"This was an auspicious omen to the common people in our neighborhood, by whom they were universally beloved: it spoke well, they said, for the *new* lady."

"Among the acquaintance and friends whose society he cultivated at intervals when he emerged from his domestic circle, was Dr. Beaufort, whose name is well known to the British public as author of one of the best maps of Ireland, with a valuable memoir of its topography. He was still better known in his own country as an excellent clergyman, pious and liberal, with most conciliating manners.

"My father first met him at Mr. Foster's (afterwards Lord Oriel) at Collon, of which place Dr. Beaufort was vicar; and afterwards saw him frequently at Black Castle, the residence of my father's favorite sister, Mrs. Ruxton.

"Dr. Beaufort's literary tastes and delightful conversation were peculiarly attractive to my father, who soon became intimate with him and with his amiable family. The eldest daughter possessed uncommon talents for drawing; and, at the request of my aunt (Mrs. Ruxton), Miss Beaufort sketched designs for some of my stories. These were shown to my father; and he criticised them as freely as if they had not been the work of a lady, and made for his daughter. He was charmed by the temper

and good sense with which his criticisms were received, and, in a visit which she and her family paid at Edgeworthstown, had an opportunity of seeing that she possessed exactly the temper, abilities, and disposition which would insure the happiness of his family, as well as his own, if he could hope to win her affections."

Maria writes of this event:—

"When I first knew of this attachment, and before I was well acquainted with Miss Beaufort, I own that I did not wish for the marriage. I had not my father's quick penetration into character. I did not at first discover the superior abilities and qualities which he saw: consequently I did not anticipate any of the happy consequences from this union which he foresaw. All that I thought, I told him. With the most kind patience he bore with me, and, instead of withdrawing his affection, honored me the more with his confidence. He took me with him to Collon, threw open his whole mind to me, let me see all the changes and workings of his heart. I remember his once saying to me, 'I believe that no human creature ever saw the heart of another more completely without disguise than you have seen mine.' I can never, without the strongest emotions of affection and gratitude, recollect the infinite kindness he showed me at this time, the solicitude he felt for my happiness at the moment when all his own was at stake, and while all his feelings were in the agony of suspense: the consequence was, that no daughter ever felt more sympathy with a father than I felt for him; and assuredly the pains he took to make me fully acquainted with the character of the woman he loved, and to make mine known to her, were not thrown away. Both her inclination and judgment decided in his favor."

In the letter of May 16, 1798, which Maria wrote to Miss Beaufort, on the occasion of her father's announcement of his intended marriage, she says, —

"Among the many kindnesses my father has shown me, the greatest, I think, has been his permitting me to see his heart *à découvert;* and I have seen, by your kind sincerity and his, that in good and cultivated minds love is no idle passion, but one that inspires useful and generous energy. I have been convinced by your example of what I was always inclined to believe, that the power of feeling affection is increased by the cultivation of the understanding. The wife of an Indian Yogii (if a Yogii be permitted to have a wife) might be a very affectionate woman, but her sympathy with her husband could not have a very extensive sphere. As his eyes are to be continually fixed upon the point of his nose, hers, in duteous sympathy, must squint in like manner; and if the perfection of his virtue be to sit so still that the birds (*vide* Sacontala) may unmolested build nests in his hair, his wife cannot better show her affection than by yielding her tresses to them with similar patient stupidity. Are there not European Yogiis, or men whose ideas do not go much farther than *le bout du nez?* And how delightful it must be to be chained, for better, for worse, to one of this species! I should guess — for I know nothing of the matter — that the courtship of an ignorant lover must be almost as insipid as a marriage with him; for 'My jewel,' continually repeated, without new setting, must surely fatigue a little."

Both witty and wise.

In continuing the letter, she makes some very good observations *apropos* of domestic life: —

"I flatter myself that you will find me gratefully exact *en belle-fille.* I think there is a great deal of difference between that species of ceremony which exists with acquaintance, and that which should always exist with the best of friends. The one prevents the growth of affection, the other preserves it in youth and age. Many foolish people make fine plantations, and forget to fence them: so that the young trees are destroyed by the young cattle, and the bark of the forest trees is sometimes injured. You need not, my dear Miss Beaufort, fence yourself round with stony palings in this family, where all have been early accustomed to mind their boundaries. As for me, you see my intentions, or at least my theories, are good enough. If my practice be but half as good, you will be content, will you not? But theory was born in Brobdignag, and practice in Lilliput. So much the better for me."

This allusion was in reference to her own diminutive figure.

Some very harsh comments were made by the reviewer of Mr. Edgeworth's memoirs on Maria's conduct in accepting gracefully successive stepmothers. He characterized her action as "indelicate." It is difficult to understand just what the gentleman would have had a young lady do under like circumstances; and, after reading the extract from the letter she wrote Miss Beaufort, one is more inclined to admire her womanly and judicious feeling than to cavil at her cheerful acquiescence in the inevitable. She gracefully took a second place where she had been first. She was somewhat older than Miss Beaufort.

Mr. Edgeworth wrote Dr. Darwin as follows: —

[To Dr. Darwin.]

"1798.

. . . "And now for my piece of news, which I have kept for the last. I am going to be married to a young lady of small fortune and large accomplishments, — compared with my age, much youth (not quite thirty), and more prudence, — some beauty, more sense, — uncommon talents, more uncommon temper, — liked in my family, loved by me. If I can say all this three years hence, shall not I have been a fortunate, not to say a wise man?"

While travelling to Dublin in the stage-coach, to marry Miss Beaufort, Mr. Edgeworth had a conversation with a friend, who made the following remark to him: —

"'No man, you know,' said he, 'but a fool, would venture to make a first speech in Parliament, or to marry, after he was fifty.'

"My father laughed, and, surrendering all title to wisdom, declared that, though he was past fifty, he was actually going, in a few days as he hoped, to be married, and in a few months would probably make his 'first speech in Parliament.'"

Mr. Edgeworth was married in Dublin, May 31, 1798, to Miss Beaufort; and they returned immediately to Edgeworthstown, through a part of the country which was in actual insurrection, as there were threats of a French invasion. They arrived there in safety. Mrs. Edgeworth long afterwards wrote of her reception: —

"All agreed in making me feel at once at home, and part of the family. All received me with the most unaffected cordiality, but with Maria it was something more. She more than fulfilled the promise of her letter: she made me at once her most intimate friend; and in all the serious concerns of life, and in every trifle of the day, treated me with the most generous confidence."

Maria, in writing of the disturbances at a distance, after describing the pleasure of the family in welcoming Mrs. Edgeworth, says, —

"I am going on in the old way, — writing stories. I cannot be a captain of dragoons, and sitting with my hands before me would not make any of us one degree safer. I know nothing of 'Practical Education.' It is advertised to be published. I have a volume of wee-wee stories, about the size of 'The Purple Jar,' all about Rosamond. 'Simple Susan' went to Fox Hall a few days ago, for Lady Anne (Fox) to carry to England."

CHAPTER VI.

Internal Dissensions. — French Invasion. — The Edgeworths' Alarm. — Their Flight. — They return to Edgeworthstown. — Defeat of the French. — Quiet restored. — "Practical Education" published. — The Plan of this Work.

MARIA writes of this time and its unsettled condition: —

"The summer of 1798 passed without any interruption of our domestic tranquillity. Though disturbances in different parts of Ireland had broken out, yet now, as in former trials, the county of Longford remained quiet, — free at least from open insurrection, and, as far as appeared, the people well disposed.

"Towards the autumn of the year 1798, this country became in such a state, that the necessity for resorting to the sword seemed imminent. Even in the county of Longford, which had so long remained quiet, alarming symptoms appeared; not immediately in our neighborhood, but within six or seven miles of us, near Granard. In the adjacent counties military law had been proclaimed, and our village was within a mile of the bounds of the disturbed county of Westmeath. Though his own tenantry, and all in whom he had put trust, were quiet, and, as far as he could judge, well disposed; yet my father was aware, from information of too good authority to be doubted, that numbers of disaffected persons throughout Ireland were leagued in secret rebellion, and waited only for the arrival of the French to break out.

"Previous to this time, the principal gentry in the county had raised corps of yeomanry; but my father, who had held for some months the commission of captain of yeoman cavalry, had delayed doing so, because as long as the civil authority had been sufficient he was unwilling to resort to military interference, or to the ultimate law of force, of the abuse of which he had seen too many recent examples. However, it now became necessary, even for the sake of justice to his own tenantry, that they should be put upon a footing with others, have equal security of protection, and an opportunity of evincing their loyal dispositions. He therefore determined to raise a corps of infantry, which would accommodate a poorer class of the people, and to admit Catholics as well as Protestants. This was so unusual, and thought to be so hazardous a degree of liberality, that by some of an opposite party it was attributed to the worst motives. Many who wished him well came privately to let him know of the odium to which he exposed himself. The timid hinted fears and suspicions that he was going to put arms into the hands of men who would desert or betray him in the hour of trial, who might find themselves easily absolved from holding any faith with a Protestant, and with one of a family, of whom the head, in former times, had been distinguished by the appellation of *Protestant Frank*. He thanked his secret advisers, but openly and steadily abided by his purpose. . . . On his own part, my father knew the risk he ran; but he braved it."

About this time Maria, in a letter describing the distressing uncertainties of the time, says, —

"My father has made our little rooms so nice for us: they are all fresh painted and papered. O Rebels! O

French! Spare them! We have never injured you, and all we wish is to see everybody as happy as ourselves."

Continuing her description of affairs, she says, —

"The corps of Edgeworthstown infantry was raised; and my father's nephew Mr. Fox, who had been lieutenant-colonel of the Longford militia, was appointed one of the lieutenants. But the arms were, by some mistake of the ordnance-office, delayed. The anxiety for their arrival was extreme, for every day and every hour the French were expected to land.

"At the first appearance of disturbance in Ireland, he had offered to carry his sisters-in-law, the Misses Sneyd, to their friends in England; but this offer they refused. Of the domestics, three men were English and Protestant, two Irish and Catholic; the women were all Irish and Catholic, excepting the housekeeper, an Englishwoman, who had lived with us many years. There were no dissensions or suspicions between the Catholics and Protestants in the family, and the English servants did not desire to quit us at this crisis.

"At last came the dreaded news. The French, who landed at Killala, were, as we learned, on their march towards Longford. The touch of Ithuriel's spear could not have been more sudden or effectual, than the arrival of this intelligence, in showing people in their real forms. In some faces joy struggled for a moment with feigned sorrow, and then, encouraged by sympathy, yielded to the *natural* expression. Still my father had no reason to distrust those in whom he had placed confidence: his tenants were steady; he saw no change in any of the men of his corps, though they were in the most perilous situation, having rendered themselves obnoxious to the rebels and invaders by becoming yeomen, and yet standing without

means of resistance or defence, their arms not having arrived.

"The evening of the day when the news of the success and approach of the French came to Edgeworthstown, all seemed quiet; but early the next morning, Sept. 4, a report reached us, that the rebels were *up* in arms within a mile of the village, pouring in from the county of Westmeath hundreds strong. Such had been the tranquillity of the preceding night, that we could not at first believe their report. An hour afterwards it was contradicted. An English servant, who was sent out to ascertain the truth, brought back word that he had ridden three miles from the village on the road described, and that he had seen only twenty or thirty men with green boughs in their hats and pikes in their hands, who said "*that they were standing there to protect themselves against the Orangemen, of whom they were in dread, and who, as they heard, were coming down to cut them to pieces.*" This was all nonsense, but no better sense could be obtained. Report upon report, equally foolish, was heard, or at least uttered. But this much being certain, that men armed with pikes were assembled, my father sent off an express to the next garrison-town (Longford), requesting the commanding officer to send him assistance for the defence of this place. He desired us to be prepared to set out at a moment's warning. We were under this uncertainty, when an escort with an ammunition-cart passed through the village on its way to Longford. It contained several barrels of powder, intended to blow up the bridges, and to stop the progress of the enemy. One of the officers of the party rode up to our house, and offered to let us have the advantage of his escort. But, after a few minutes deliberation, this friendly proposal was declined. My father determined that he would not stir till he knew

whether he could have assistance; and, as it did not appear as yet absolutely necessary that we should go, we staid — fortunately for us!

"About a quarter of an hour after the officer and the escort had departed, we, who were all assembled in the portico of the house, heard a report like a loud clap of thunder. The doors and windows shook with some violent concussion: a few minutes afterwards the officer galloped into the yard, and threw himself into my father's arms almost senseless. The ammunition-cart had blown up: one of the officers had been severely wounded, and the horses and the man leading them killed; the wounded officer was at a farmhouse on the Longford road, at about two miles distance. The fear of the rebels was now suspended in concern for this accident. Mrs. Edgeworth went immediately to give her assistance: she left her carriage for the use of the wounded gentleman, and rode back. At the entrance of the village she was stopped by a gentleman in great terror, who, taking hold of the bridle of her horse, begged her not to attempt to go farther, assuring her that the rebels were coming into the town. But she answered that she must and would return to her family. She rode on, and found us waiting anxiously for her. No assistance could be afforded from Longford; the rebels were re-assembling, and advancing towards the village; and there was no alternative but to leave our home as fast as possible. One of our carriages having been left with the wounded officer, we had but one other at this moment for our whole family, eleven in number. No mode of conveyance could be had for some of the female servants: our faithful English housekeeper offered to stay till the return of the carriage which had been left with the officer; and, as we could not carry her, we were obliged, most reluctantly, to leave her behind, to follow,

as we hoped, immediately. As we passed through the village, we heard nothing but the entreaties, lamentations, and objurgations of those who could not procure the means of carrying off their goods or their families: most painful when we could give no assistance.

"Next to the safety of his own family, my father's greatest anxiety was for his defenceless corps. No men could behave better than they did at this first moment of trial. Not one absented himself; though many, living at a distance, might, if they had been so inclined, have found plausible excuses for non-appearance. The bugle was not sounded to call them together; but they were in their ranks in the street the moment they had their captain's orders, declaring that whatever he commanded they would do. He ordered them to march to Longford. The idea of going to Longford could not be agreeable to many of them, who were Catholics, because that town was full of those who called themselves, — I would avoid using party-names if I could, but I can no otherwise make the facts intelligible, — who called themselves Orangemen, and who were not supposed to have favorable opinions of any of another religious persuasion. There was no reluctance shown, however, by the Catholics of this corps to go among them. The moment the word 'march' was uttered by their captain, they marched with alacrity. One of my brothers, a youth of fifteen, was in their ranks: another, twelve years old, marched with them.

"We expected every instant to hear the shout of the rebels entering Edgeworthstown. When we had got about half a mile out of the village, my father suddenly recollected that he had left on his table a paper containing a list of his corps, and that, if this should come into the hands of the rebels, it might be of dangerous consequence to his men: it would serve to point out their

houses for pillage, and their families for destruction. He turned his horse instantly, and galloped back. The time of his absence appeared immeasurably long; but he returned safely, after having destroyed the dangerous paper.

"About two miles from the village was the spot where the ammunition-cart had been blown up. The dead horses, swollen to an unnatural bulk, were lying across the road. As we approached, we saw two men in an adjoining field looking at the remains of one of the soldiers, who had been literally blown to pieces. They ran toward us; and we feared that they were rebels, going to stop us. They jumped over the ditch, and seized our bridles, but with friendly intent. With no small difficulty they dragged us past the dead horses, saying, 'God speed you! and make haste anyway!' We were very ready to take their advice. After this, on the six long miles of the road from Edgeworthstown to Longford, we did not meet a human being. It was all silent and desert, as if every creature had fled from the cabins by the roadside.

"Longford was crowded with yeomanry of various corps, and with the inhabitants of the neighborhood, who had flocked thither for protection. With great difficulty the poor Edgeworthstown infantry found lodgings. We were cordially received by the landlady of a good inn. Though her house was, as she said, 'fuller than it could hold;' yet she, being an old friend of my father's, did contrive to give us two rooms, in which we eleven were thankful to find ourselves.

"All our concern now was for those we had left behind. We heard nothing of our housekeeper all night, and were exceedingly alarmed; but early the next morning, to our great joy, she arrived. She told us, that, after we had left her, she waited hour after hour for the carriage. She

could hear nothing of it, as it had gone to Longford with the wounded officer. Towards evening a large body of rebels entered the village. She heard them at the gate, and expected that they would have broken in the next instant. But one, who seemed to be a leader, with a pike in his hand, set his back against the gate, and swore that, if he was to die for it the next minute, he would have the life of the first man who should open that gate, or set enemy's foot within side of that place. He said the housekeeper, who was left in it, was a good gentlewoman, and had done him a service, though *she did not know him, nor he her.* He had never seen her face; but she had, the year before, lent his wife, when in distress, sixteen shillings, the rent of flax-ground, and he would stand her friend now.

"He kept back the mob: they agreed to send him to the house with a deputation of six, *to know the truth*, and to ask for arms. The six men went to the back-door, and summoned the housekeeper. One of them pointed his blunderbuss at her, and told her that she must fetch all the arms in the house. She said she had none. Her champion asked her to say if she remembered him. 'No: to her knowledge, she had never seen his face.' He asked if she remembered having lent a woman money to pay her rent of flax-ground the year before. 'Yes,' she remembered that; and named the woman, the time, and the sum. His companions were thus satisfied of the truth of what he had asserted. He bid her not to be *frighted*, for that no harm should happen to her nor any belonging to her: not a soul should get leave to go into her master's house; not a twig should be touched, nor a leaf harmed. His companions huzzaed, and went off. Afterwards, as she was told, he mounted guard at the gate during the whole time the rebels were in town.

"When the carriage at last returned, it was stopped by the rebels, who filled the street. They held their pikes to the horses, and to the coachman's breast, accusing him of being an Orangeman, because, as they said, he wore the Orange colors (our livery being yellow and brown). A painter, a friend of ours, who had been that day at our house copying some old family portraits, happened to be in the street at that instant, and called out to the mob, '*Gentlemen, it is yellow! Gentlemen, it is not orange!*' In consequence of this happy distinction they let go the coachman; and the same man, who had mounted guard at the gate, came up with his friends, rescued the carriage, and, surrounding the coachman with their pikes, brought him safely into the yard. The pole of the carriage having been broken in the first onset, the housekeeper could not leave Edgeworthstown till morning. She passed the night in walking up and down, listening and watching; but the rebels returned no more, and thus our house was saved by the gratitude of a single individual.

"We had scarcely time to rejoice in the escape of our housekeeper, and safety of our house, when we found that new dangers arose even from this escape. Even from the house being spared, jealousy and suspicion arose in the minds of many, who at this time saw every thing through the midst of party prejudice. The dislike to my father's corps appeared every hour more strong. He saw the consequences that might arise from the slightest breaking-out of quarrel. It was not possible for him to send his men, unarmed as they still were, to their homes, lest they should be destroyed by the rebels: yet the officers of the other corps wished to have them ordered out of the town, and to this effect joined in a memorial to government. . . .

"These petty dissensions were, however, at one moment suspended and forgotten in a general sense of danger. An express arrived late one night, with the news that the French, who were rapidly advancing, were within a few miles of the town of Longford. A panic seized the people. There were in the town eighty of the carabineers and two corps of yeomanry, but it was proposed to evacuate the garrison. My father strongly opposed this measure; and undertook, with fifty men, if arms and ammunition were supplied, to defend the jail of Longford, where there was a strong pass, at which the enemy might be stopped. He urged that a stand might be made there till the king's army should come up. The offer was gladly accepted: men, arms, ammunition, all he could want or desire, were placed at his disposal. He slept that night in the jail, with every thing prepared for its defence. But the next morning fresh news came, that the French had turned off from the Longford road, and were going towards Granard: of this, however, there was no certainty. My father, by the desire of the commanding officer, rode out to reconnoitre; and my brother went to the top of the court-house with a telescope, for the same purpose. We (Mrs. Edgeworth, my aunts, my sisters, and myself) were waiting to hear the result in one of the upper sitting-rooms of the inn, which fronted the street. We heard a loud shout; and, going to the window, we saw the people throwing up their hats, and heard huzzas. An express had arrived, with news that the French and the rebels had been beaten; that Gen. Lake had come up with them, at a place called Ballynamuck, near Granard; that fifteen hundred rebels and French were killed, and that the French generals and officers were prisoners.

"We were impatient for my father, when we heard

this joyful news. He had not yet returned, and we looked out of the windows in hopes of seeing him; but we could see only a great number of the people of the town, shaking hands with each other. This lasted a few minutes; and then the crowd gathered in silence round one man, who spoke with angry vehemence and gesticulation, stamping, and frequently wiping his forehead. We thought he was a mountebank haranguing the populace, till we saw that he wore a uniform. Listening with curiosity, to make out what he was saying, we observed that he looked up towards us; and we thought we heard him pronounce the names of my father and brother in tones of insult. We could scarcely believe what we heard him say. Pointing up to the top of the court-house, he exclaimed, —

"'*That* young Edgeworth ought to be dragged down from the top of that house.' Our housekeeper burst into the room, so much terrified she could hardly speak.

"'My master, ma'am! it is all against my master! The mob say they will tear him to pieces if they catch hold of him. They say he's a traitor, — that he *illuminated* the jail to deliver it up to the French.'

"No words can give an idea of our astonishment. *Illuminated!* What could be meant by the jail being illuminated? My father had literally but two farthing candles, by the light of which he had been reading the newspaper late the preceding night. These, however, were said to be signals for the enemy! The absurdity of the whole was so glaring that we could scarcely conceive the danger to be real: but our pale landlady's fears were urgent; she dreaded that her house should be pulled down. We found that the danger was not the less because the accusation was false. On the contrary, it was great in proportion to its absurdity; for the people who could at once be under

such a perversion of intellects, and such an illusion of their senses, must indeed be in a state of frenzy.

"The crowd had by this time removed from before the windows, but we heard that they were gone to that end of the town through which they expected Mr. Edgeworth to return.

"We sent immediately to the commanding officer, informing him of what we had heard, and requesting his advice and assistance. He came to us, and recommended that we should despatch a messenger to warn Mr. Edgeworth of his danger, and to request that he would not return to Longford this day. The officer added, that, in consequence of the rejoicings for the victory, his men would probably be all drunk in a few hours, and that he could not answer for them. This officer, a captain of yeomanry, was a good-natured but inefficient man, who spoke under considerable nervous agitation, and seemed desirous to do all he could, but not to be able to do any thing. We wrote instantly, and with difficulty found a man who undertook to convey the note. It was to be carried to meet him on one road, and Mrs. Edgeworth and I determined to drive out to meet him on the other. We made our way down to the inn-yard, where the carriage was ready. Several gentlemen spoke to us as we got into the carriage, begging us not to be alarmed. Mrs. Edgeworth replied that she was more surprised than alarmed. The commanding officer and the sovereign of Longford walked by the side of the carriage through the town; and, as the mob believed that we were going away not to return, we got through without molestation. We went a few miles on the road towards Edgeworthstown, till, at a tenant's house, we heard that my father had passed by half an hour ago; that he was riding in company with an officer, supposed to be of Lord Cornwallis's or Gen.

Lake's army; that they had taken a *short cut*, which led into Longford by another entrance, — most fortunately, not that at which an *armed* mob had assembled, expecting the object of their fury. Seeing him return to the inn with an officer of the king's army, they imagined, as we were afterwards told, that he was brought back a prisoner; and they were satisfied.

"The moment we saw him safe, we laughed at our own fears, and again doubted the reality of the danger; more especially, as he treated the idea with the utmost incredulity and scorn.

"Major (now Gen.) Eustace was the officer who returned with him. He dined with us. Every thing appeared quiet: the persons who had taken refuge at the inn were now gone to their homes; and it was supposed, that, whatever dispositions to riot had existed, the news of the approach of some of Lord Cornwallis's suite, or of troops who were to bring in the French prisoners, would prevent all probability of disturbance. In the evening the prisoners arrived at the inn. A crowd followed them, but quietly. A sun-burnt, coarse-looking man, in a huge cocked hat, with a quantity of gold lace on his clothes, seemed to fix all attention. He was pointed out as the French general, Homburg, or Sarrazin. As he dismounted from his horse, he threw the bridle over its neck, and looked at the animal as if he felt that he was his only friend.

"We heard my father in the evening ask Major Eustace to walk with him through the town to the barrack-yard to evening parade; and we saw them go out together, without our feeling the slightest apprehension. We remained at the inn. By this time Col. Handfield, Major Cannon, and some other officers had arrived, and were at dinner in a parlor on the ground floor, under our

room. It being hot weather, the windows were open. Nothing now seemed to be thought of but rejoicings for the victory. Candles were preparing for an illumination: waiters, chambermaids, landlady, all hands were busy scooping turnips and potatoes for candlesticks, to stand in every pane of every loyal window.

"In the midst of this preparation, about half an hour after my father had left us, we heard a great uproar in the street. At first we thought the shouts were only rejoicings for victory; but, as they came nearer, we heard screechings and yellings, indescribably horrible. A mob had gathered at the gates of the barrack-yard, and, joined by many soldiers of the yeomanry on leaving parade, had followed Major Eustace and my father from the barracks. The major being this evening in colored clothes, the people no longer knew him to be an officer, nor conceived, as they had done before, that Mr. Edgeworth was his prisoner. The mob had not contented themselves with the horrid yells that we had heard, but had been pelting them with hard turf, stones, and brickbats. From one of these my father received a blow on the side of his head, coming with such force as to stagger and almost to stun him; but he kept himself up, knowing that if once he fell he should be trampled under foot. He walked on steadily till he came within a few yards of the inn, when one of the mob seized hold of Major Eustace by the collar. My father, seeing the windows of the inn open, called with a loud voice, 'Major Eustace is in danger!'

"The officers, who were at dinner, and who till that moment had supposed the noise in the street to be only drunken rejoicings, immediately ran out. At the sight of British officers and drawn swords, the populace gave way, and dispersed in different directions.

"The preparation for the illuminations then went on,

as if nothing had intervened. All the panes of our windows in the front room were in a blaze of light by the time the mob returned through the street. The night passed without further disturbance.

"As early as we could the next morning we left Longford, and returned homewards; all danger from rebels being now over, the rebellion having been terminated by the late battle.

"When we came near Edgeworthstown, we saw many well-known faces at the cabin-doors, looking out to welcome us. One man, who was sitting on the bank of a ditch by the roadside, when he looked up as our horses passed, and saw my father, clasped his hands, and blessed our return; his face, as the morning sun shone upon it, was the strongest picture of joy I ever saw. The village was a melancholy spectacle, — windows shattered, and doors broken. But though the mischief done was great, there had been little pillage. Within our gates we found all property safe; literally 'not a twig touched, nor a leaf harmed.' Within the house every thing was as we had left it: a map that we had been consulting was still open upon the library-table, with pencils, and slips of paper containing the lessons in arithmetic, in which some of the young people had been engaged the morning we had been driven from home; a pansy, in a glass of water, which one of the children had been drawing, was still on the chimney-piece. These trivial circumstances, marking repose and tranquillity, struck us at this moment with an unreasonable sort of surprise, and all that had passed seemed like an incoherent dream. The joy of having my father in safety remained, and gratitude to Heaven for his preservation. These feelings spread inexpressible pleasure over what seemed to be a new sense of existence. Even the most common things appeared delightful: the

green lawn, the still groves, the birds singing, the fresh air, all external nature, and all the goods and conveniences of life, seemed to have wonderfully increased in value, from the fear into which we had been put of losing them irrecoverably.

"The first thing my father did, the day we came home, was to draw up a memorial to the lord-lieutenant, desiring to have a court-martial held on the sergeant, who, by haranguing the populace, had raised the mob at Longford; his next care was to walk through the village, to examine what damage had been done by the rebels, and to order that repairs of all his tenants' houses should be made at his expense. A few days after our return, government ordered that the arms of the Edgeworthstown infantry should be forwarded by the commanding officer at Longford. Through the whole of their hard week's trial, the corps had, without any exception, behaved perfectly well. It was perhaps more difficult to honest and brave men passively to bear such a trial than to encounter any to which they could have been exposed in action.

"When the arms for the corps arrived, my father, in delivering them to the men, thanked them publicly for their conduct, assuring them that he would remember it whenever he should have opportunities of serving them, collectively or individually. In long after years, as occasions arose, each, who continued to deserve it, found in him a friend, and felt that he more than fulfilled his promise."

Maria, with her father and mother, visited the scene of the battle at Ballynamuck; and she found some difficulty in managing her saddle-horse "Dapple," who did not like all the sights of the camp as well as she did. There was another alarm of a rising of the rebels at Granard, which occasioned

a barricading of the house, and watches being set all day and night in the town and houses at Edgeworthstown and the neighborhood; but the rising was suppressed, and the tide of insurrection and war passed. We hear no more of this, except the trials of the insurgents. In speaking of the after events, Maria writes: —

"Some few, very few indeed, of his tenantry on a remote estate — alas! too near Ballynamuck — did join the rebels. These persons were never re-admitted on my father's estate. But it was difficult, in certain cases, to know what ought to be done; for instance, with regard to the man who had saved our house from pillage, but who had certainly been joined with the rebels. It was the wise policy of government to pardon those who had not been ringleaders in this rebellion, and who, repenting of their folly, were desirous to return to their allegiance and to their peaceable duties. My father sent for this man, and said he would apply to government for a pardon for him. The man smiled, and clapping his pocket said, 'I have my *Corny* here safe already, I thank your honor, else sure I would not have been such a fool as to be showing myself without I had a *purtection*,' — a pardon signed by the lord-lieutenant, Lord Cornwallis, in their witty spirit of abbreviation, they called a *Corny*.

"When my father said, that, however much we were obliged to him for saving the house, we could not *reward* him for being a rebel, he answered, 'Oh, I know that I could not expect it, nor look for any thing at all, but what I got, — *thanks*.' With these words he went away, satisfied, that, though my father gave him nothing at this time, his honor would never *forget him*.

"A considerable time afterward, my father, finding

that the man conducted himself well, took an opportunity of serving him. . . .

"Before we quit this subject, it may be useful to record, that the French generals who headed this invasion declared they had been completely deceived as to the state of Ireland. They had expected to find the people in open rebellion, or at least, in their own phrase, *organized* for insurrection; but, to their dismay, they found only ragamuffins, — *canaille*, as they called them, — who, in joining their standard, did them infinitely more harm than good."

The year 1797 found the family quietly enjoying Edgeworthstown. Maria and her father arranged in January for acting a comedy called "Whim for Whim." It was acted twice, with much applause, in the theatre built over the study. It was later offered to Sheridan, but rejected by him, as he did not consider it suited for the general public.

"Practical Education" was published in 1798. It was well praised and abused by the critics, and made its authors famous. It appeared in a quarto form in two volumes, and went to a third edition in 1815. This work, from the hands of Maria Edgeworth and her father, contains many valuable original thoughts on education. It shows a wide and exhaustive range of study and experience in the care and development of the moral, mental, and physical nature of childhood and early youth. The titlepage bears the names of both father and daughter; but hers justly has the first place, for to her the public owed the best part of the conception and execution of this admirable book. It is true, she

did avail herself of her father's assistance, and perhaps she relied too much on his views and theories for her plan; yet one can easily see where she thinks for herself, and writes from her own ideas.

In the immense family of Mr. Edgeworth, it was easy to find all the anecdotes, all the details and facts, necessary for a careful study of a practical system of education: but this work shows a vast amount of reading; a patient accumulation of others' views on instruction; a careful and thorough weighing of methods, systems, and theories, which make it quite an exhaustive history of education up to the time it was written. All this we owe to the clear mind and the methodical arrangement of Maria. She quotes, from a great number of writers, very pertinent and timely observations on the subject. Liberality and breadth mark both the plan and the execution of the treatise.

Many have had the care of young children; but few, very few people have drawn from that labor, which involves so much anxiety, fatigue, and daily worry, such a store of useful and judicious impressions and hints for future educators. Those who write for and about children, and their wants and amusements, are usually visionary and unpractical, because, as a rule, they have not been in constant, or even infrequent, attendance on them. And those who are with children much ordinarily have neither the time, ability, nor the inclination to do what Maria Edgeworth did in preparing this treatise on "Practical Education," all the while being in constant practice of its rules.

Rousseau, Mme. de Genlis, and others have offered to the public flowery and fanciful schemes of education, beneficial neither to the individual nor the community. The father who put his own offspring into a foundling-asylum was hardly a fit exponent of theories of education; though unquestionably he had originality of thought, and many hints may be gained from his writings. The views of Mme. de Genlis also lose something when taken in connection with the incidents of her life; and one cannot on this, as some other subjects, quite separate the author from the book. The reader cannot take, without limitations and painful doubts, the theories, however grand, beautiful, and original, of such writers as these, and some others who have written upon this subject. An immoral life does not add either dignity to the theme or confidence in the writer, when works of morality are to be considered.

Sound morality, and practical study of the young and their development, must go hand in hand with the clearest perception and the most brilliant theories for their future education.

This book was severely criticised by some, who found no chapter on religion in it. What the preface says should have disarmed these cavillers. There is a sound and pure morality inculated in every part of the book: it breathes only the highest aspiration for human good and elevation. In the opening pages, where the authors explain their views, they say, —

"On religion and politics we have been silent; because we have no ambition to gain partisans, or to make prose-

lytes, and because we do not address ourselves exclusively to any sect or to any party."

Mrs. Barbauld[1] made some objections to the plan of Mr. Edgeworth, which was designed to exclude children from the society and example of servants. Gentlemen's "gentlemen" and ladies' maids, with the usual large number of house and stable retainers of a well-appointed household in Great Britain, are too often the earliest instructors of children of good families. We have only to look at the way in which a large family is regulated even at the present day in England, to see that servants play too important a part in the first years of little children's lives.

In his establishment this system was comparatively easy. He had the Misses Sneyd with him, a wife, and some grown-up daughters. He himself was always at home, with the exception of short journeys or visits. His method of education was so well understood by his family, that an occasional absence made no material difference in the working of the system. His children were all intelligent and clever. Those who lived to grow up certainly exemplified the advantages of his manner of instruction in his own family.

Maria says, —

"With respect to what is commonly called the education of the heart, we have endeavored to suggest the easiest means of inducing useful and agreeable habits, well-regulated sympathy, and benevolent affections. A

[1] Anne Letitia Barbauld, 1743-1825.

witty writer says, 'Il est permis d'ennuyer en moralités d'ici jusqu'à Constantinople.' Unwilling to avail ourselves of this permission, we have sedulously avoided declamation; and whenever we have been obliged to repeat ancient maxims and common truths, we have at least thought it becoming to present them in a new dress."

They think they have reduced education to an "experimental science," having studied it in their own family. The preface says of the preparation and composition of the book, —

"The first hint of the chapter on 'Toys' was received from Dr. Beddoes; the sketch of an introduction to chemistry for children was given to us by Mr. Lovell Edgeworth; and the rest of the work was resumed from a design formed and begun twenty years ago."

When a book appears under the name of two authors, it is natural to inquire what share belongs to each of them. All that relates to the art of teaching to read, in the chapter on "Tasks," the chapters on "Grammar and Classical Literature," "Geography," "Chronology," "Arithmetic," "Geometry," and "Mechanics" was written by Mr. Edgeworth: the rest of the work was written by Maria. The chapter on "Obedience" was written from the notes of Mrs. Elizabeth Edgeworth, who had remarkable success in managing her family. The manuscript was submitted to her, and she revised parts of it "in the last stage of a fatal disease."

The plan of the book is quite extensive and com-

prehensive. Besides the chapters already mentioned, those by Maria may be briefly named. They are the best part of the work; being original, witty, clever, and valuable: "Toys," "Tasks," "On Attention," "Servants," "Acquaintance," "On Temper," "On Truth," "On Obedience," "On Rewards and Punishments," "On Sympathy and Sensibility," "On Vanity, Pride, and Ambition." In vol. ii., "On Public and Private Education," "On Female Accomplishments," "Memory and Invention," "Taste and Imagination," "Wit and Judgment," "Prudence and Economy," and a summary of the whole. There are twenty-five chapters in all, and an appendix. Mr. Edgeworth's part contains good *résumés* of the departments of study he names. They are such as any teacher of average ability could have prepared. Maria's work is evidently that of the thinker; and she shows plainly in this — her first large work — the master hand which drew the never-to-be-forgotten characters of her novels and tales. One sees here the rules on which she built her social fabric.

American and modern English systems of education differ, of course, widely from the style in vogue at the time the Edgeworths wrote. We draw for our methods of instruction all the best of the many plans and theories of education heretofore presented to the world. One may yet learn much from the work of the Edgeworths; and in an article on "The Pedigree of the Quincy Pedagogy, of Quincy, Mass.," Mr. Horace Bumstead, of Atlanta University, Georgia, says in 1880, —

"Its lineage is made bright with the names of Edgeworth in England, Rousseau and Jacotot in France, Pestalozzi in Switzerland, Frœbel and Diesterweg in Germany, and our own Horace Mann in America."

He says in the same article, —

"The word-method has even an earlier history, both in Europe and in this country, than is here indicated. Near the beginning of the present century it was advocated by Maria Edgeworth in England, and practised by the celebrated Jacotot in France."

No one who has studied education in theory, or for the purpose of utilizing his information in teaching, should fail to read this book of the Edgeworths. There is a sincerity of purpose, and a direct, clear, and vivacious style, in "Practical Education," which will attract and interest all who are engaged in instruction. Several of the chapters are admirable and brilliant treatises on the subjects they profess to explain. Among those which are to be especially commended are those on "Memory and Invention," "Taste and Imagination," and "The Summary." Maria says near the end of the book, —

"The general principle, that we should associate pleasure with whatever we wish our pupils should pursue, and pain with whatever we wish that they should avoid, forms, our readers will perceive, the basis of our plan of education."

CHAPTER VII.

Maria visits England. — Writes "Forgive and Forget," and "To-morrow." — Mr Edgeworth and Maria meet Old Friends. — Mrs. Barbauld. — Society at Clifton. — Visit to London. — Johnson. — Return to Ireland. — "Castle Rackrent." — Maria prints more "Moral Tales." — "Belinda." — "Essay on Irish Bulls." — Professor Pictet's Visit to Edgeworthstown. — A Journey to Paris proposed. — Dr. Darwin's Death.

In January, 1799, Mr. Edgeworth, who had been elected to the last Parliament held in Ireland, by the borough of St. John's-town, County Longford, visited Dublin with his wife. In the spring they went to England, accompanied by Maria. In this year Maria wrote a little story on a hint from Miss Charlotte Sneyd, "that the early lessons for the poor should speak with detestation of the spirit of revenge." She adds, —

"I have just finished a little story called 'Forgive and Forget,' upon this idea. I am now writing one on a subject recommended to me by Dr. Beaufort, on the evils of procrastination: the title of it is 'By and By' (afterwards 'To-morrow'). I am much obliged to the whole committee of education and criticism at Edgeworthstown for their corrections, criticism, and copying."

Maria has something to say of the friends they met in England: —

"My father visited his old friends Mr. Keir, Mr. Watt, Dr. Darwin, and Mr. William Strutt of Derby. . . . He paid his respects to his friend Sir Joseph Banks, attended the meetings of the Royal Society, and met various old acquaintance, whom he had formerly known abroad.

"Among the friends he formed during this summer in England, and in consequence of the publication of his sentiments on education, was Mrs. Barbauld. Her writings he had long admired for their classical strength and elegance, for their high and true tone of moral and religious feeling, and for their practically useful tendency. She gratified him by accepting an invitation to pass some time with us at Clifton; and ever afterwards, though at a great distance from each other, her constant friendship for him was a source of great pleasure and just pride."

Mrs. Edgeworth says, —

"We met at Clifton Mr. and Mrs. Barbauld. He was an amiable and benevolent man, so eager against the slave-trade that when he drank tea with us he always brought some East-India sugar, that he might not share our wickedness in eating that made by the negro slave. Mrs. Barbauld, whose 'Evenings at Home' had so much delighted Maria and her father, was very pretty, and conversed with great ability in admirable language."

That was a spicy argument, we can fancy, between Mr. Edgeworth and his new friend, Mrs. Barbauld, where she objected to the chapter on "Servants" in "Practical Education." On this chapter Mrs. Barbauld very truly remarked, that it was impracticable: in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, morally and physically impossible. She was willing to allow that in his own family he might have been able to

carry this method into practice, but in an ordinary family it could not be done. Mr. Edgeworth was forced to acknowledge that Mrs. Barbauld was right in her criticism, and he modified his views on this subject. Mrs. Barbauld considered, too, that this manner of separating children entirely from servants tended "to foster pride and perhaps ingratitude." "The one and twenty other good reasons" she said could be given, Mr. Edgeworth spared her. The fact must be admitted, that in the clear and sprightly wit and strong mind of the essayist, poet, and accomplished school-mistress of Palgrave, — Mrs. Barbauld, — the Irish inventor, author, and man of the world met his match. He had probably never seen a finer mind, joined with a more brilliant wit, than that of Mrs. Barbauld. He had met men of science, and women of letters and fashion; but in Mrs. Barbauld he met an antagonist of mettle. Early training and classic studies had added keen weapons to a naturally strong mind, and thorough acquaintance with practical methods of educating and developing young intellects made her an authority on such matters. Mrs. Barbauld's reputation rests as much on the names of such pupils as Lord Denman, William Taylor of Norwich, Sir William Gell, Basil, Lord Daer, and other well-known men, as on her essays, poems, and books for the young. Her books for children are still unrivalled, and will do honor to her name as long as the English language lasts. No better work has been done for the little ones.

While Mr. and Mrs. Edgeworth were at Clifton, where her first child, Fanny, was born, they were

visited by her brothers, the Rev. William Beaufort, and Capt. Francis Beaufort, afterwards admiral and hydrographer to the navy. Maria wrote of him in 1828 to Capt. Basil Hall, "He is so true, and so really friendly and able." M. Arago told her at Chamouni that Capt. Beaufort's "Karamania," then a celebrated and new book, "was, of all the books of travel he had seen, that which he admired the most: it must remain a standard book." He became more nearly connected with the Edgeworths later; for when his first wife, daughter of Capt. Le Stock Wilson, died, he presently married for his second wife a daughter of Mr. Edgeworth by his third wife. Maria says that her father became very much attached to Capt. Beaufort, as much so "as he had ever been to Lord Longford or Mr. Day."

In a letter of Mrs. Edgeworth, dated May, 1799, from Clifton, she mentions a future philosopher in the assistant of Dr. Beddoes, "a young man, a Mr. Davy,"[1] and his discovery of nitrous-oxide gas, and describes the sensations produced by inhaling it. Dr. and Mrs. Beddoes made the Edgeworths' stay at Clifton very agreeable. Mrs. Edgeworth says, —

"Her grace, genius, vivacity, and kindness, and his great abilities, knowledge, and benevolence, rendered their house extremely pleasant."

Sir Humphry Davy said of Dr. Beddoes, —

"He is one of the most original men I ever saw, — uncommonly short and fat, with little elegance of manners,

[1] Sir Humphry Davy, distinguished chemist and philosopher. Born at Penzance in 1778; died at Geneva, 1829.

and nothing characteristic *externally* of genius or science; extremely silent, and, in a few words, a bad companion. Mrs. Beddoes is the reverse of Dr. Beddoes, — extremely cheerful, gay, and witty. She is one of the most pleasant women I ever met with."

The Pneumatic Institution must have been an amusing place, with its experiments on gases, and the new hobbies in which Dr. Beddoes indulged himself. One was of carrying cows into invalids' bedrooms, that they might inhale the breath of the animal. One family were turned out of their lodgings because "the people of the house would not admit the cows. They said they had not built and furnished their rooms for the hoofs of cattle!" Well might Sir Humphry Davy, in considering the character of Dr. Beddoes, call him "a truly remarkable man, but more admirably fitted to promote inquiry than to conduct it."

Robert Southey, in alluding to his own intimacy with Davy at Bristol, "then in the flower and freshness of his youth," speaks of his visits to him at the Pneumatic Institution, and his discovery of nitrous-oxide gas. He "was a first-rate man," and "has actually invented a new pleasure" in this gas, "for which language has no name." He said Dr. Beddoes "advertised, at least six weeks ago, certain cases of consumption treated in cow-houses; and the press has been standing still now in expectation of — what think you? Only waiting till the patients be cured."

After leaving Clifton, the Edgeworths went to London for a few weeks. At this time Maria's publisher, Johnson the bookseller, was in prison

for a publication which was considered treasonable. Mr. Edgeworth and Maria went to see him in the King's Bench (prison). She "had a great regard for Johnson, though his procrastination tried her patience in all the business of printing and publishing her works. She thought him a generous, able, kind-hearted man, and an excellent critic."

Joseph Johnson, of St. Paul's Churchyard, was a man of considerable ability. He was the person who first saw the merits of Cowper's poems, and accepted them, after several other publishers had rejected them with something like scorn. "His own taste was excellent, and his own disposition quiet and peaceable: but he became too much connected with Godwin and Holcroft; and it was afterwards a disadvantage to 'Maria' that her works were published by the printer of what was considered seditious and sectarian books."

During this stay in England, Maria met Dr. Darwin. She thought him "not only a first-rate genius, but one of the most benevolent, as well as the wittiest, of men. He stuttered, but far from lessening the charm of conversation." She used to say that "the hesitation and slowness with which his words came forth added to the effect of his humor, and showed good sense." They returned to Ireland in September of 1799, after a successful visit in England. Mr. Edgeworth, in writing to Dr. Darwin, says, "Maria continues writing for children, under the persuasion that she cannot be employed more serviceably."

In a letter of 1800 from Maria to her aunt, Mrs. Ruxton, she mentions "Castle Rackrent," which was

published in this year, and begs her aunt not to "tell any one that it is ours." Maria attempted about this time to make a visit to her father's friend, Mr. Foster, Speaker of the Irish House of Commons, at Collon. She had visited Castle Saunderson; and arriving at Allenstown, where Mr. Waller, an uncle of Mrs. Edgeworth's, lived, they found that Mrs. Foster, widow of Bishop Foster, feared infection, as they had left fever in Edgeworthstown: they "performed quarantine for a week" in Allenstown, and gave up the visit to Collon.

An octavo edition of "Practical Education" came out at Christmas of this year. These were busy years for Maria. A new edition of the "Moral Tales" came out shortly after this. Maria says two of the frontispieces were designed by Mrs. Edgeworth for this edition, and two by Charlotte Edgeworth. In this edition there were three new stories, —"The Knapsack," "The Prussian Vase," and "Angelina."

"Belinda" appeared first in 1801. Maria was at Black Castle when the first copy reached her. It is easy to fancy that the wit and humor displayed in her writings were not confined to her books. She dearly enjoyed a joke, and contrived, before her aunt knew it, to tear out the title-pages of the three volumes; and her aunt read it without any suspicion as to the authorship, and, excessively entertained and delighted, she insisted on Maria's listening to passage after passage as she went on. Maria affected to be deeply interested in some book she held in her hand; and when Mrs. Ruxton exclaimed, "Is not that

admirably written?" Maria coldly replied, "Admirably *read*, I think;" and then her aunt, as if she had said too much, added, "It may not be so very good, but it shows just the sort of knowledge of high life which people have who live in the world." Then, again and again, she called upon Maria for her sympathy, till, quite provoked by her faint acquiescence, she at last accused her of being envious. "I am sorry to see my little Maria unable to bear the praise of a rival author." This was too much for poor Maria, who burst into tears, and, showing her aunt the titlepages, she declared herself the author. But Mrs. Ruxton was not pleased: she never liked "Belinda" afterwards; and Maria, too, had a painful recollection of her aunt's suspecting her of being envious.

"Castle Rackrent" and "Belinda" made a great impression on the reading public. "Castle Rackrent" had soon a Continental reputation, and was translated into several foreign languages. Its wit, humor, and pathos, its Irish characters, its evident *vraisemblance*, the entire novelty of the scenes and the customs, the life in Ireland, — all made it a marked book. It was safe to predict that the hand which drew the character of Thady, and the adventures of "Castle Rackrent," would do the best of work for many years. "Belinda" was a clever book, full of fine pictures of English life of that period, and genuine bits of character. The heroine, Belinda, is well contrasted with Lady Delacour; and Clarence Hervey is a bright and sparkling wit. "Belinda" lacks the humor of "Castle Rackrent," and has not

the brilliancy of "Ennui," or some of the shorter tales; but it has a charm quite its own, and will often be quoted, and may well be read by every young woman for its many admirable hints as to social affairs.

In the autobiography of Mrs. Fletcher of Edinburgh, we have a mention of "Belinda:" —

"I well remember, after the fatigues of sight-seeing, the pleasure and refreshment I had at our lodging in reading Miss Edgeworth's admirable novel, 'Belinda.' Some of the hours so spent were among the pleasantest of our London visit."

In 1801 a second edition of "Castle Rackrent" was published, and the name of Maria Edgeworth appeared on its titlepage.

"Its success was so triumphant that some one — I heard his name at the time, but do not now remember it, and it is better forgotten — not only insisted that he was the author, but actually took the trouble to copy out several pages with corrections and erasures, as if it was his original manuscript."

This is not an unusual experience with successful authors.

Miss Edgeworth, acknowledging some communication from Ann Taylor[1] (afterwards Mrs. Gilbert), who was the author of many excellent and valuable poems and pieces in prose for little children, writes her: —

"Whenever I have an opportunity of adding to 'Par-

[1] Ann and Jane Taylor of Ongar, authors of Original Poems and Nursery Rhymes, Hymns for Infant Minds, etc.

ent's Assistant,' or to 'Early Lessons,' I will avail myself of your suggestions, and endeavor, as you judiciously recommend, to ridicule the garrulity, without checking the open-heartedness, of childhood. My 'Little Rosamond,' who perhaps has not the honor of being known to you, is sufficiently garrulous; but she is rather what the French call '*une petite raisonneuse*' than what you call a 'chatter-box.' Miss Larolles, in 'Cecilia,' is a perfect picture of a chatter-box *arrived at years of discretion.* I wish I could draw Miss Larolles in her childhood.

"In a book called 'Original Poems for Children,' there is a pretty little poem, 'The Chatter-box,' which one of my little sisters, on hearing your letter, recollected. It is signed Ann T——. Perhaps, madam, it may be written by you; and it will give you pleasure to hear that it is a favorite with four good talkers of nine, six, five, and four years old."

In 1802 appeared the "Essay on Irish Bulls," which excited much interest: it was the joint production of Maria and her father. A curious story is told of a gentleman who was much interested in improving the breed of Irish cattle. He sent, on seeing the advertisement, for this work on "Irish Bulls." He was surprised by the appearance of the classical bull at the top of the first page, which had been designed by Mrs. Edgeworth from a gem; and when he began to read the book, he threw it away in utter disgust: he had purchased it in good faith, as secretary of the Irish Agricultural Society.

"Among the foreigners who came to England about this time was Professor Pictet[1] of Geneva"

[1] Marc Auguste Pictet, naturalist and philosopher, president of the Society for the Advancement of the Arts, at Geneva. 1752–1825.

says Maria. This gentleman was a "brother of the editor of the 'Journal Britannique,' who translated 'Practical Education,' and with whom my father had had some correspondence on the subject. Professor Pictet visited Ireland, and came to Edgeworthstown." He was accompanied by his friend M. Chénier, and they visited Mr. Tuite of Sonna. They went from Sonna to the Edgeworths; and, after their return to Geneva, Professor Pictet wrote a description of his days there. "The Bibliothèque Britannique" contains much the same account of the family, with translated extracts from Maria's works: these extracts were of such a nature as to greatly interest Continental readers. M. Pictet's [1] "Voyage de Trois Mois en Angleterre" was published at Geneva in 1802. I have translated the portion concerning the Edgeworths, as it will interest the reader: —

"At last we arrived. Mr. Edgeworth was found on his doorstep, and received us on alighting, and called us each by name. Farewell, then, to my little ruse; and I am unaware of my betrayer. We are instantly on the footing of old friends. I saw, on entering the room, a large party about the table at tea, which, however, was only the family, who made a place for us; and I tried to make out which of the assemblage was the celebrated Maria. Mr. Edgeworth saw what I was about, and remarked, 'I see very well that it is not on my account alone that you have come here. Perhaps even Maria has the precedence of her father in your estimation. I will not dispute it. But to punish you, you must learn that she is thirty miles away from here, and that you cannot

[1] A three-months' journey in England, Scotland, and Ireland during the summer of year IX. (1801), by Marc Auguste Pictet.

see her to-day. But remain with us until to-morrow. I will send a messenger to her immediately. She can take the coach to-night, and arrive here before to-morrow noon.' — 'Impossible. We are engaged to return to Sonna to a large dinner.' — 'Oh, well! promise me to return again to-morrow, and I promise you shall see her then.' We did not hesitate to accept the compromise: the messenger departed, and three too rapid hours for us passed in the company of this interesting family.

Mr. Edgeworth is, I believe, about sixty years old, and appears to be yet in the prime of life. He is extremely active in body and mind. He has had seventeen children by four wives, the last of which is some years younger than his well-beloved daughter Maria. Ten of his children are living, and an eleventh is expected in a few months. One sees in the hall the portraits of these four wives; and an appearance of perfect union, friendship, and intelligence seems to reign among their children: which is pleasing, and is a proof in favor of Mr. Edgeworth's principles of education, and shows his talent for conducting his household. A characteristic of this family made itself known immediately. This was reasonable curiosity, which allowed one at a time to listen to and examine with interest all that which gave an occasion to acquire new ideas. I had brought that little sextant which I have spoken to you about, with the intention of showing it to Mr. Edgeworth. He had no sooner examined it than he explained very fully the structure and use to Mme. Edgeworth. She showed it to the oldest child, this one to a younger brother, who was not the least intelligent of the family, etc. I was not free from uneasiness in seeing so delicate an instrument pass from hand to hand, but it returned without accident.

"We spoke of Maria, who appeared to me to be ap-

THE EDGEWORTH FAMILY.

preciated in the family. In this same room was the little table on which she wrote her charming works, in the midst of the conversation and noise of her brothers and sisters. She has already published the pretty romance of 'Belinda.' A little volume will soon be translated, entitled 'The Castle Rackrent,' in which she made a point principally of painting the manners, habits, and also the idiom of the Irish, by making an old steward of a certain castle relate the history of four families who had successively occupied it. The bright and inimitable *naïveté* of the language which she makes this man use, the mistakes and absurdities which he makes without suspecting it, his species of pleasantries, — all these go to make a whole, which, though hardly capable of being translated, is still full of wit and gayety. 'Do you wish to see the original of this good Thady that has made you laugh?' said Mr. Edgeworth to us. 'I will make him known to you.' He called a head servant, who overlooked the haymakers in the fields, and asked him in our presence several questions upon the objects of his story, to which we had the pleasure of listening. 'Have we not still in the house,' said he to him, 'that workman who has sometimes seen the fairies dance on the bowling-green?' — 'Yes, sir.' — 'Let him come here.' The workman appeared. 'Tell us, John, what you saw the other day.' — 'Sir, saving your presence, I was upon the roof, mending the tiles, when I saw them come one after the other. — 'Who, the tiles?' — 'No, sir, the fairies; and they danced in a circle upon the turf.' — 'But are you not mistaken?' — 'Mistaken! I saw them as plainly as I now see you, sir, and this honorable company.' — 'And of what height were the fairies?' — 'They were a little shorter than my leg, sir.' — 'Ah! very well; and how were they dressed?' — 'In truth, sir, I did not

look much at their dress, but I noticed that they had on boots.' — 'Ah! boots?' — 'Yes, sir; but they were little boots, inasmuch as I lost sight of them in the whirlwind of dust.' — 'You see, gentlemen,' said Mr. Edgeworth to us, 'that Maria has invented nothing in her "Castle Rackrent."'

"One of his sons, between the age of seven and eight, had struck us by his reflective air. 'I give you that for a good head,' said he (Mr. Edgeworth) to us: 'he will be a geometrician; he is always occupied with calculations.' We then took a walk in the park. We came across a bench, which had but three of the four legs belonging to it. 'There, William,' said the father, 'you see this bench which has only three legs: how would you trace a line on its surface, on one side of which one could sit with safety?'

"The little man stopped in front of the bench, while we continued our walk; and, on returning, we found him still there, but with his problem solved. He showed us the diagonal between the two feet which were farthest apart, which was the line in question. Two or three robin red-breasts flew near at our approach, jumping from branch to branch, as if they wished to follow us. 'You see these little birds,' said Mr. Edgeworth to us: 'they prove to you that our children do not torment them.'

"We returned to the house; and Mr. Edgeworth, who has the taste and intelligence of a mechanic, made it very interesting to us by showing the interior, which is full of ornamental and useful inventions. Here we saw a clock with an escapement of his own invention, and which wound itself by the opening of the door of a neighboring passage, the one which was used most frequently in the house. There were some pullies, of simple and ingenious construction, for the spontaneous shutting of the doors.

Near by, a door, in opening, doubled itself and formed a screen, by which one passage closed itself while another opened. The posts of the beds shut down on each other, for facility in moving. The drawers of large bureaus ordinarily are, as one knows, difficult to shut properly: these had under the middle of the back a groove, which necessitated perpendicular action in the front, and made the drawer shut quietly and uniformly. One knows also that the English windows, if the sashes are joined too closely, are difficult to open, and that, on the other hand, they allow the air to enter if they are not closed sufficiently. Here the uprights of the windows and their grooves are made a little in an angle, which is highest at the back. A wedge in the middle fastens closely when the window is shut, and when it is slightly opened. When the window is wide open, it does not tighten it, and disagreeable friction is prevented.

"Here is a little social theatre with turning side-scenes, very ingeniously arranged; there, a rolling-mill for drawing the lead proper for setting their glass windows. In all the shutters are military arrangements ready to make cross-fire upon the brigands in case of an attack. I should never finish if I were to tell you all of them. Mme. Edgeworth has also her portion of talents. She draws and paints with great taste and ease. Her father, Mr. Beaufort, is a distinguished man. He has made, among other things, an excellent map of Ireland, the most recent and correct which has been made. Mr. Edgeworth, remarking that I examined it with attention and interest, forced me to accept it. I put great value on this gift, as this map is not to be bought."

They then returned to Sonna for the next day's dinner, and —

"The following morning we went to our rendezvous at Edgeworthstown. (I have omitted to tell you that the castle is close to this little city, which sends a member to Parliament, who is, without doubt, always an Edgeworth.) They were breakfasting, as before; but Maria and Mr. Lovell Edgeworth, the oldest son of Mr. Edgeworth, were this time at the table taking tea. I had, on entering, no eyes for any one but her. I had persuaded myself that the author of the work on education, and of other productions, useful as well as ornamental, would betray herself by a remarkable exterior. I was mistaken. A small figure, eyes nearly always lowered, a profoundly modest and reserved air, little expression in the features when not speaking: such was the result of my first survey. But when she spoke, which was much too rarely for my taste, nothing could have been better thought, and nothing better said, though always timidly expressed, than that which fell from her mouth.

"What do you imagine was the first subject of conversation started by Mr. Edgeworth?

"'To what degree do you presume,' said he to me, 'that a gasometer can determine the pressure exercised on an elastic fluid?' I will not trouble you with the answer, nor with the chemical conversation which began and ended happily with the breakfast. We passed into the parlor. In the middle was a large table covered with papers, drawings, and cards. Some one took occasion to show me an apparatus, extremely ingenious and simple, thought of and made by the children of the house, to illustrate perspective, and which is described in the 'Treatise on Practical Education.' I admired it. 'It is yours,' said Mr. Edgeworth immediately: 'will you accept it as a remembrance of a family who are sincerely attached to you?' I accepted it with gratitude. We

spoke of the little quarrel with my brother, who had reproached him with the omission of the subject of religion in a work where it seemed natural to introduce it. He justified himself, *first*, inasmuch as he had showed in his reply the difficulty of treating this subject in a country where religion is not uniform; and he made me read the most of a very explicit declaration of his opinion upon the propriety of applying religious ideas to other objects of education, which he had inserted in the preface of the second edition of their work. We passed on to various moral subjects, in which I felt genuine pleasure in finding myself in perfect accord with the ideas of Maria, who followed and listened to me. She and her father regarded each other with an air of the most extreme surprise, that a stranger, coming three hundred leagues, seemed to have, so to speak, thoughts in common with them. There were many questions about happiness, and particularly that of the lower classes of society. Maria told me that she had written upon this subject, the most interesting that one could treat of practically. I gave them part of one of those little specifics for happiness with which I have sometimes entertained my friends, and which I have reason to believe are good, after my experience. I spoke to them of that serpentine curve with which I have always surrounded my life. Its axis is a horizontal line which represents sleep: above this, is the region of happiness; below, that of misfortune. At the end of each day, in asking myself whether I would have liked better to have slept than watched, the reply that I make myself determines on which side of the curve shall be traced the order of the day; and this order is made so much the longer as the remembrance of the means of pleasure or pain which remains to me of the day is more or less exalted. If any one will amuse

himself by representing his life in this way, he will find that happiness will oscillate about the line with sufficient regularity to compensate him; especially when one takes a rather long limit, — one year, for instance.

"While the ladies were making their toilets, we tried some chemical experiments with a small portable laboratory which I had brought with me on my journey. We took a walk in the park, and then sat down to dinner. What a contrast to the dinner in the city! (Sonna.) I invited Maria to take up the pen upon this subject, and to strike with the sword of ridicule — which she wields with so much talent — the absurd so-called social constitution of the high classes; by which, far from employing in these re-unions the faculties of each for the common advantage, and in particular to increase in each one the susceptibility of moral enjoyments, they place a damper on that noble flame of the spirit which distinguishes the intelligent being from the brute, and reduce one to the ignoble pleasure of simply eating and drinking, — to such enjoyment of self-love, almost always balanced by equal mortification, and to a little gossip, for compensation. The result of which is, that one compares that which can be produced by all the human faculties directed towards the highest sum of happiness with that which he procures in return. But it must be, that in order to procure and keep such a maximum, society shall be reconstructed upon its base by education. It would make a sort of revolution to overturn that ancient and Gothic structure that is honored in certain countries by the name of civilization. Perhaps some spirits, wise and courageous, will arouse themselves, and, working together, bring about a gradual reform; but it will not be that generation which will cull the fruit of their own labors."

M. Pictet concluded his account of Maria and the family with some words about Charlotte Edgeworth and the eldest son. He returned to Sonna, and on his arrival in Geneva wrote this description of the Edgeworths. He had urged Mr. Edgeworth to go to the Continent, promising him letters of introduction to scientific friends in Paris. His advice decided Mr. Edgeworth to make a Continental journey, and they started in the autumn of 1802. They found the account of M. Pictet very useful to them on this journey, for "The Journal Britannique" was taken at every public library and in all the "*école centrale;*" and they received many attentions in consequence of its pleasant reference to them and their literary labors.

Dr. Darwin's death, which occurred April 17, 1802, came as a severe blow to the Edgeworths. His benevolent disposition, long friendship, and clever mind, all endeared him to them. He wrote Mr. Edgeworth April 17, and dating his letter "Priory, near Derby," describes their removal from Derby to the lovely spot called the Priory. He says, —

"All of us like our change of situation. We have a pleasant house, a good garden, ponds full of fish, and a pleasing valley somewhat like Shenstone's, — deep, umbrageous, and with a talkative stream running down it. Our house is near the top of the valley, well screened by hills from the east and north, and open to the south, where at four miles distance we see Derby tower. . . . Pray tell the authoress that the water-nymphs of our valley will be happy to assist her next novel." . . .

A few more words about the printing of "The Temple of Nature," by Mr. Johnson follow; and then a sudden faint attack seized Dr. Darwin, who had risen early, and was writing, in apparently perfect health. He died in about an hour after the attack. The letter so playfully written was concluded by the hand of a friend, and sent to Ireland.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Edgeworths' Departure for England. — Places of Interest visited. — Maria visits Miss Watts. — France. — The Low Countries. — Arrival at Paris. — Mr. Watt. — The Edgeworths make many Pleasant Acquaintances and Friends. — French Scientific Men. — Dumont. — Lord Henry Petty. — The Delesserts. — Mme. de Pastoret. — French Society. — Madame d'Ouditot. — Literary Men. — Noted Women. — Maria's Works translated into French, German, and Spanish. — Police Surveillance. — Maria meets M. Edelcrantz. — An Offer of Marriage. — Her Decision.

In the autumn of 1802 the Edgeworths' party, consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Edgeworth, Maria, and Charlotte, set out for England, on their way to the Continent. They were accompanied by Emmeline, who left them at Conway, and proceeded to the house of Mrs. Beddoes, at Bristol, where she was married to John King, a surgeon, afterwards quite distinguished. This gentleman, whose name was more properly König, was a native of Berne, Switzerland. He was a very intimate friend of Dr. Beddoes, and associated with him in his experiments at Clifton. Southey, in writing John May in 1827, when Dr. King removed to Bristol, says, —

"I would have you know King, the surgeon, also, with whom I have lived in terms of great intimacy, and for whom I have a great and sincere regard. His wife is sister of Miss Edgeworth. A more remarkable man is not

easily to be found, and his professional skill is very great."

Southey wrote a Dr. King a letter in French, which is rather a curious production. It is addressed to John King, Esq., Pneumatic Institution, Hot Wells, Bristol.

"Ce matin-la pour le premiere fois, l'invitation de M. Edgeworth a son chateau m'a trouvé, c'est a dire, verbalement, par un jeune Irlandois, homme d'esprit et qu'est meilleur, bon democrat. Je vous prie faites mes remerciements a Mme. Beddoes pour sa pere. Je suis veritablement obligé et j'espere profiter par sa politesse desormais, peut-être, mon ami, nous voyageons ensemble en Ireland. Des montagnes, des rochers, des sauvages, faut il plus a faire un Voyage Pittoresque meilleur que celle de votre ami M. Bourret qui a écrit sur votre terre.

[Signed] Je suis veritablement au fausse grammaire votre ami, ROBERT SOUTHEY."

Maria says, —

"Charlotte, who was then, according to the description of a celebrated foreigner, '*jeune personne de seize ans, jolie, fraîche comme la rose*,' accompanied us to Paris.

"In passing through England, we went to Derby and to the Priory, to which we had been so kindly invited by him who was now no more. The Priory was all stillness, melancholy, and mourning. It was a painful visit, yet not without satisfaction; for my father's affectionate manner seemed to soothe the widow and daughters of his friend, who were deeply sensible of the respect and zealous regard he showed for Dr. Darwin's memory."

They found "the servants in deep mourning, Mrs. Darwin and her three beautiful daughters in deep

mourning, and deeply afflicted." The daughters of Dr. Darwin were celebrated for their beauty, which was an inheritance from their lovely mother. Frances Waddington, afterwards Baroness Bunsen, in her recollections of her childhood, remarks on these ladies, "whose appearance is still distinct in my memory;" and she adds that they "adorned in life the families into which they married, by merit equal to their beauty."

On their way towards London the party saw Lord Penrthyn's slate-quarries at Bangor, the copper-works at Holywell, and visited the very interesting establishment of Josiah Wedgwood at Etruria. Thomas Wedgwood, the son of Josiah Wedgwood, the founder of the celebrated pottery-works, was a friend of Dr. Beddoes, and assisted him pecuniarily, that the Pneumatic Institution might aid more poor patients. He also passed some time at the institution, in the vain hopes of relief from the inhalation of the various gases used by Dr. Beddoes in pulmonary diseases.

Mr. Edgeworth called on Lord Moira at Downington Castle, and was very cordially received by the son of his old friend Lady Moira. He gave him a letter to the Princess Joseph de Monaco, who was formerly Mrs. Doyle.

Maria, in a letter to Miss Mary Sneyd, tells an interesting story of a visit made to a sister authoress. At Leicester, the party having heard of Miss Watts, a poetess who had published a volume of poems and translated parts of "Tasso," went to visit her, ushered in by the enthusiastic bookseller whom they had visited, and who told them of her abode.

"When we had dined, we set out with our enthusiastic bookseller. We were shown by the light of a lantern along a very narrow passage between high walls, to the door of a decent-looking house. A maid-servant, candle in hand, received us. 'Be pleased, ladies, to walk upstairs.' A neatish room, nothing extraordinary in it except the inhabitants, — Mrs. Watts, a tall, black-eyed, prim, dragon-looking woman in the background; Miss Watts, a tall young lady in white, fresh color, fair, thin oval face, rather pretty. The moment Mrs. Edgeworth entered, Miss Watts, mistaking her for the authoress, darted forward, with arms — long, thin arms — outstretched to their utmost swing. 'OH, WHAT AN HONOR THIS IS!' each word and syllable rising in tone till the last reached a scream. Instead of embracing my mother, as her first action threatened, she started back to the farthest end of the room; which was not light enough to show her attitude distinctly, but it seemed intended to express the receding of awe-struck admiration, stopped by the wall. Charlotte and I passed by unnoticed, and seated ourselves by the old lady's desire; she, after making twistings of her wrists, elbows, and neck, all of which appeared to be dislocated, fixed herself in her arm-chair, resting her hands on the black mahogany *splayed* elbows. Her person was no sooner at rest, than her eyes and all her features began to move in all directions. She looked like a nervous and suspicious person electrified. She seemed to be the acting partner in this house, to watch over her treasure of a daughter, to supply her with worldly wisdom, to look upon her as a phœnix, and — scold her. Miss Watts was all ecstasy, and lifting up of hands and eyes, speaking always in that loud, shrill, theatrical tone with which a puppet-master supplies his puppets. I, all the time, sat like a mouse. My father

asked, 'Which of those ladies, madam, do you think is your sister authoress?' — 'I am no physiognomist [in a screech] but I do imagine that to be the lady,' bowing as she sat, almost to the ground, and pointing to Mrs. Edgeworth. 'No: guess again.' — 'Then, that must be *she*,' bowing to Charlotte. 'No.' — 'Then this lady,' looking forward to see what sort of an animal I was, for she had never seen me till this instant. To make me some amends, she now drew her chair close to me, and began to pour forth praises. 'Lady Delacour, oh! "Letters for Literary Ladies," oh!'

"Now for the pathetic part. This poor girl sold a novel, in four volumes, for ten guineas to Lane."

On their arrival in London, Mr. Edgeworth bought a large, comfortable travelling-carriage for their Continental journey. They left England for Calais, where they landed the 4th of October, after a very rough and disagreeable passage.

This is a picture given by Maria of their departure from Gravelines for Brussels. They went from Calais to Gravelines, and there took Flemish horses for their carriage.

"An equipage at which Sobriety herself could not have forborne to laugh. To our London coach were fastened by long rope-traces six Flemish horses of different heights, but each large and clumsy enough to draw an English wagon. The nose of the foremost horse was thirty-five feet from the body of the coach, their hoofs all shaggy, their manes all uncombed, and their tails long enough to please Sir Charles Grandison himself. These beasts were totally disencumbered of every sort of harness except one strap, which fastened the saddle on their

backs; and high, high upon their backs sat perfectly perpendicular long-waisted postilions in jack-boots, with pipes in their mouths."

To break the monotony of the road between Gravelines and Brussels, Maria had a book called "Un Voyage dans les Pays Bas, par M. Breton," and the story of Mlle. de Clermont, in Mme. de Genlis's "Petits Romans," to read. She says she "never read a more pathetic and finely written tale" than the latter. Maria was always an admirer of the romantic and sentimental in literature, though accused by the critics of wanting those qualities in her own writings. In all her remarks about the works of others, this is noticeable, that she had a strong and just appreciation of pathos and imagination.

At Bruges the Edgeworths met the librarian of the École Centrale, while visiting that institution, and also a Mr. Edwards, an Englishman from Jamaica. He was a friend of Mr. Brian Edwards, and well acquainted with Johnson the bookseller, and had met Dr. Aikin and Mr. and Mrs. Barbauld at his house. M. Lenet found them to be the Edgeworths described by Pictet in the paper in "The Bibliothèque Britannique," and was very attentive and courteous. They reached Paris after a pleasant journey, somewhat marred by the annoyance of a courier, who was very necessary at that day in Continental travelling. Maria wrote that he might find something needed by them "if he is not drunk;" which was, apparently, not an unusual condition with him.

On their arrival in Paris, they took lodgings in the Rue de Lille. Maria says of their Parisian life, —

"After a delightful tour through the Low Countries, we arrived at Paris, where we were to spend the winter. In the Hotel, Place de Louis Quinze, to which we drove on entering Paris, my father was fortunate in meeting his illustrious friend, Mr. Watt. To him he owed an introduction to many foreigners of celebrity. Pictet had, as we found, in the most friendly manner, prepared the way for us at Paris; and there he more than kept all his promises of assistance, and of introduction to his numerous literary acquaintance and to highly cultivated and agreeable society. He was not in Paris on our arrival; but we had, among other kind friends, in particular, the venerable Abbé Morellet.[1]

. . . "M. de Prony,[2] who was then at the head of *Les Ponts et Chausées*, showed him, in the best manner, all that to a well-informed engineer was most worthy of notice in the repository of that celebrated school, put him in the way of seeing every other invention, object, and person in the mechanical and engineering department; but, above all, he felt grateful for M. de Prony's giving him so much of his own conversation, and for various indubitable proofs of private esteem and confidence.

. . . . . .

"Berthollet, Montgolfier, and Breguet gratified him by bestowing that gift, of which philosophers and men of science, occupied upon great objects, and independent of common society, best know the value, — their time. It

[1] Morellet, André. A celebrated abbé, born at Lyons in 1727. He wrote some works on political economy and statistics. Died in 1819.

[2] Prony, Gaspard-Clair-François-Marie-Riche de. Baron de Prony. A distinguished French mathematician. 1755-1839.

was at this period that we first became acquainted with our excellent friend, M. Dumont.

"This gentleman, so well known by his conversational talents and his exquisite critical acumen, has entitled himself to the gratitude of the literary and political world in general, and of Englishmen in particular, by the successful pains he has bestowed in arranging, elucidating, and making known to the Continent of Europe several valuable English works,[1] — works which, notwithstanding their depth of thought and extent of views, would never have acquired popularity, if they had not been re-written in M. Dumont's clear and forcible style.

"From the commencement of their friendship in 1802, my father continued to correspond with M. Dumont; and we owe much to his critical advice and sagacity in all our literary pursuits and publications."

M. Dumont, of whom the reader will hear much from Miss Edgeworth, was travelling with his pupil and friend, Lord Henry Petty. Miss Edgeworth met them at the house of Mme. Gautier at Passy. Pictet had described M. Delessert to the Edgeworths as a kind of "French Rumford." They found Mme. Delessert intelligent and agreeable, and their daughter, Mme. Gautier, very charming. Rousseau wrote his "Letters on Botany" for this lady. He was a friend of the family. François Delessert, the second son, was educated chiefly by his sister, Mme. Gautier. Maria describes Passy as a "French Richmond." Mme. Gautier had "fine eyes, was very intelligent, and well dressed."

[1] Bentham's Traités sur la Législation, and Théorie des Peines et des Récompenses, etc.

Lord Henry Petty was to play a prominent part in the life of Miss Edgeworth, as a good friend for many years. The present generation of readers will remember him better as the Marquis of Lansdowne, the *amicus curiæ* of politics, and the very type of a mild and venerable Whig. He lived to be the Nestor of his party. This nobleman was the son of the first Marquis of Lansdowne by his second wife, a daughter of Lord Ossory. He succeeded his elder brother in the title in 1809.

Lord Henry Petty was educated at the Westminster School; and, after passing there five years, he was sent to the University of Edinburgh. Lord Ashburton and he passed much of their leisure at the house of the celebrated Dugald Stewart, then professor in the University. He also joined what was known as the "Speculative Society," and exercised his powers of debate at these weekly meetings. On leaving Edinburgh, Lord Henry was entered at Trinity College, Cambridge; where he staid till 1801, when he took his degree of Master of Arts. By his father's desire he then started with M. Dumont to make a tour of the Continent; but the peace of Amiens was too brief to allow time for this journey, and he returned to England that year. He was almost immediately nominated and elected to the family borough of Calne. After a year's silence he first spoke on the subject of Ireland. He showed a remarkable degree of information on political economy, and he was welcomed by the opposition as a valuable adherent. In 1803, when Lord Melville was charged with retaining sums of money in his

hands as treasurer of the navy, and a violent party struggle ensued, Lord Henry distinguished himself by an exceedingly able speech, which made many consider him a rival of Pitt in oratory. At the death of Pitt, in 1806, Lord Henry was offered, and accepted, office as chancellor of the exchequer; and he was also elected by a very large majority to the representation of the University of Cambridge, over his opponents Lords Althorpe and Palmerston.

On the death of Fox "the ministry of all the talents" soon fell; and Lord Henry lost his office, and also his seat in Parliament, by his consistent advocacy of the Catholic claim. The university elected Sir Vickary Gibbs by only two votes over Lord Palmerston; and Lord Henry was at the foot of the poll. He was, however, provided with a seat by the influence of the Duke of Bedford, and returned for Camelford, a borough so small that it figured in Schedule A of the Reform Bill. In 1808 he married his cousin, Lady Louisa Strangeways, daughter of the Earl of Ilchester. In 1809, on the death of the second marquis, his half-brother, he took his seat in the House of Peers. Lord Lansdowne continued in the opposition till 1827, when he joined the administration of Mr. Canning, as secretary for the Home Department. The death of Mr. Canning, and the change which brought in the Liverpool cabinet and the Duke of Wellington, made Lord Lansdowne the leader of the opposition. His name is associated with many reform measures during the half-century in which he took active part in political affairs. The abolition of slavery, and the Catholic

emancipation acts, had his heartfelt support. His urbanity and courtesy to his political opponents won for him a large measure of esteem and regard.

Under Earl Grey's administration Lord Lansdowne held the office of president of the council for nearly ten years, with a brief exception,—the period of the Duke of Wellington's short administration. On the formation of the Russell cabinet, in 1846, Lord Lansdowne returned to office as president of the council, and ably advocated the cause of national education. On the retirement of the ministers from office, in 1852, Lord Lansdowne took a dignified leave of official life, in a heartfelt address to the House announcing the dissolution of the Lord John Russell cabinet. He was often consulted by the queen, who was the fourth sovereign under whom he had held office. One cannot fail to notice the consistency of Lord Lansdowne's official life. Liberal views were his first and last care during a long political career; reform measures had his earliest attention; and he lived long enough to see the successful result of his labors.

Lansdowne House, in Berkeley Square, was one of the houses adorned alike by the domestic virtues and social graces. Its master was early thrown among men of distinction in literature, politics, and art; and he soon became the liberal friend and patron of art and literature. Of Lady Lansdowne there are many charming mentions in contemporaneous literature, which will be noticed later.

Dumont, the remarkable tutor of the brilliant young Englishman, was to become the intimate friend

and valued critic of Miss Edgeworth; and the Genevan *pasteur* himself became so prominent a man in literature that a little sketch of his life must be given here. Pierre Étienne Louis Dumont was born in Geneva in 1759. He studied theology; and, after preaching a while in his native place, he went to St. Petersburg, in 1783, where he took charge of the French Protestant Church.

In 1785 he left Russia for England, where he became tutor to the sons of Lord Shelburne. He became very intimate with many of the Whig party, and with Sir Samuel Romilly he formed a close friendship.

He had known Romilly early in life at Geneva, who spoke of Dumont in his account of his own early life as follows: —

"His vigorous understanding, his extensive knowledge, and his splendid eloquence fitted him to have acted the noblest part in public life; while the brilliancy of his wit, the cheerfulness of his humor, and the charms of his conversation, have made him the delight of every private society in which he has lived. But his most valuable qualities are, his strict integrity, his zeal to serve those whom he is attached to, and his most affectionate disposition."

During the early years of the French Revolution, Dumont was in Paris, where he saw much of Mirabeau; and he has given the world much valuable information about that period, in his "Souvenirs sur Mirabeau et sur les deux Premiers Assemblées Législatives," published in 1832, seven years after

the writer's death. In 1791 Dumont returned to England, and formed an intimacy with Jeremy Bentham.

Bentham gave him his manuscripts, and he labored long and patiently to elucidate and make available the immense material which the philosopher had prepared. The results were the various works of Bentham on legislation. Macaulay says of his industrious and unselfish work, in an eloquent eulogium of him, in reviewing his "Souvenirs de Mirabeau," "Possessed of talents and acquirements which made him great, he wished only to be *useful*."

Hazlitt wittily says of this, Bentham's "works have been translated into French. They ought to be translated first into English." Sydney Smith also commented on Dumont's share in this; saying to Moore, that Dumont had brought out the obscurity of Bentham, and made it "clear and understandable." In 1814 Dumont returned to Geneva, and became a member of the representative council. He died in 1825 at Milan.

The Delesserts were visited intimately by the Edgeworths, who found them most kind and friendly. Madame Delessert was the benefactress of Rousseau. It was said he was never so good or happy as when in her society. To her generosity he owed his retreat in Switzerland. She was a woman of high character, and her *salon* was closed to those of whose conduct she could not approve; though her acts of benevolence were many and wise. It is said that Berquin's "Ami des Enfans" records one of her charitable deeds; but her own children could not tell

Miss Edgeworth which story contained this episode, as she concealed it.

Among the many friends they made in Paris may be named Mme. de Pastoret. This lady, who was the original of "Mme. de Fleury," in Maria's story of that name, was preceptress to the princess in the ancient *régime*, being appointed to that post in opposition to the wife of Condorcet; while M. de Pastoret was chosen preceptor to the dauphin. M. Pastoret was president of the First Assembly, and at the head of the king's council before the revolution. He alone was saved from the guillotine: the other four members perished in the reign of terror; he escaped by his courage and decision. The Marquis de Chastellux's speech best describes Mme. de Pastoret, says Maria: "*Elle n'a point d'expression sans grâce, et point de grâce sans expression.*" Louis XVIII. made Count Pastoret a marquis, and he was afterwards chancellor of France.

Mr. Ticknor says in 1818, —

"She has natural talent, and has cultivated herself highly. I have seldom seen a better balanced mind, or feelings more justly regulated."

Mr. Ticknor again mentions meeting Mme. de Pastoret in 1837: —

"The Mme. de Fleury of Miss Edgeworth. This tale was founded on incidents in Mme. Pastoret's life related by her to Miss Edgeworth, to whom she was much attached. . . . De Fleury was not an invented name, but the name of an estate belonging to her, and taken as

such by Miss Edgeworth, whom she knows personally extremely well."

In February of 1803, Maria made a sketch for the story of "Mme. de Fleury," but did not finish it till long afterwards. The incident of the locked-up child was told her by Mme. Pastoret, to whom it had happened. The period of the Revolution was a frightful one for the Pastorets, but they learned much from this time of suffering and distress.

Mme. Pastoret was a noble character, and she did much for the cause of education. She first established infant-schools in France.

The Edgeworths visited much, and made many acquaintances among the various circles which gathered again in Paris after the return of the nobles. At the house of M. and Mme. Suard they met many eminent men and charming women. M. Suard was editor of the "Publiciste." Mme. Suard "Mr. Day paid his court to thirty years ago."

At the house of the venerable Abbé Morellet, Maria met an old lady of note. This was "Mme. d'Ouditot, an old lady of seventy-two, — the 'Julie' of Rousseau." She describes her as "shockingly ugly, and squints," but adds, —

"I wish I could be such a woman at seventy-two. She told us that Rousseau, whilst he was writing so finely on education, and leaving his own children in the foundling hospital, defended himself with so much eloquence that even those who blamed him in their hearts could not find tongues to answer him.

"Once at dinner at Mme. d'Ouditot's there was a

fine pyramid of fruit. Rousseau, in helping himself, took the peach which formed the base of the pyramid, and the rest fell immediately. 'O Rousseau!' said she, 'that is what you always do with all our systems: you pull down with a single touch, but who will build up what you pull down?' I asked if he was grateful for all the kindness shown him. 'No, he was ungrateful: he had a thousand bad qualities; but I turned my attention from them to his genius, and the good he had done mankind.'

"I felt in her company the delightful influence of a cheerful temper, and soft, attractive manners; enthusiasm which does not extinguish, and which spends, but does not waste, itself on small but not trifling objects."

The Abbé Morellet, at whose breakfast this conversation took place, was a man of marked character. His high moral courage and consistent conduct throughout the trying period of the revolution gave him a place in the esteem and regard of his friends, which his learning and fine literary taste increased. He had a deservedly high influence in Paris. Mr. Edgeworth had made his acquaintance in 1772–73, when he was in France with Mr. Day. Maria was much interested in the abbé. She says that he seemed to enjoy his position among the younger people, whose society he frequented. "I hear people complaining of growing old," said he; "but for my part, I enjoy the privileges and comforts, in short, the convenience, of old age (*les commodités de la vieillesse*)." This amiable, respectable, and respected old man, in some playful lines he wrote on his own birthday, declares, that if the gods were to permit him to return again on earth, in whatever form he

might choose, he should make, perhaps, the whimsical choice of returning to this world as an old man.

They met Camille Jordan,[1] and M. Degerando.[2] Jordan had, just before this, published a pamphlet on the choice of Bonaparte as First Consul for life. This was at first condemned; but, as the time was not ripe for Napoleon to declare himself as a complete despot, he allowed the address to go unpunished. At the home of Mme. Campan they met Mme. Récamier, "the beautiful lady who had nearly been squeezed to death in Paris." Mme. Campan professed to follow the principles of "Professional Education" in her great boarding-school, and later at the institution at Ecouen, where the daughters of the officers of the legion of honor were educated. Mme. Campan paid the Edgeworths "many compliments." Mr. Edgeworth was not greatly impressed with Mme. Récamier. He says, "She certainly is handsome, but there is nothing noble in her appearance. — She was very civil," he adds. They attended one of Mme. Récamier's *salons*, and found there "a strange *mélange* of merchants and poets, philosophers, and parvenues, English, French, Portuguese, and Brazilian." Says Maria, "They also went to the opera with her."

Among other notabilities they met Mme. Lavoisier; Gen. Kosciusko,[3] "simple in his manners, like all truly great men," says Maria; the Prince and

[1] Camille Jordan, French orator and statesman. 1771–1821.

[2] Marie Joseph de Gerando, French writer on education and philosophy. 1772–1842.

[3] Kosciusko, Polish patriot and leader. 1756–1817.

Princess Joseph de Monaco; and the Abbé Sicard.[1] Maria visited the famous institution of the abbé for the instruction of the deaf and dumb, with the Pictets. At one of Mme. Suard's assemblages of friends, they met the celebrated Lally-Tollendal, and the Duc de Crillon. The Marquis Lally-Tollendal emigrated to England with Mme. de Staël, and figures much in Miss Burney's account of the life at Juniper Hall. Mme. de Staël called him "*Le plus gras des hommes sensibles*," but he was usually known in France, by his eloquence, as *the French Cicero.*

Miss Edgeworth's pretty novel of "Belinda" was translated into the French by the Comte de Ségur about this time. "Castle Rackrent" was translated into the German. Maria saw an extract from "Castle Rackrent" in a French book. This gave the wake, the confinement of Lady Cathcart to her own house for many years, and the sweeping the stairs by Thady with his wig, as common and usual occurrences in Ireland. While at a grand review in the Place de Carrousel, a gentleman came in "who had passed many years in Spain." Says Maria, "He began to talk to me about Madrid; and, when he heard my name, he said a Spanish lady is translating 'Practical Education' from the French. She understands English; and he gave me her address, that we may send a copy of the book to her."

In a letter of Maria's dated "*Siècle réparateur*," as Monge has christened this century 1803, she mentions the fact that "Early Lessons" is being trans-

[1] Sicard, Roch-Ambrose Cucurron, an eminent teacher of the deaf and dumb. 1742-1822.

lated into French on one side of the page, and English on the other. Of this translation she says, that "Didot has undertaken to publish 'The National Primer,' which is much approved of here for teaching the true English pronunciation." This last was Mr. Edgeworth's book, written to explain and illustrate his method of teaching children to read.

Maria, in describing the social life in Paris at this period, says that the *soirées* begin at nine o'clock; and cards, with all kinds of conversation, and a light supper, make up the evening's entertainment.

"I have never heard any person talk of dress or fashion since we came to Paris, and very little scandal. A scandal-monger would be starved here. The conversation frequently turns on the new *petites pièces*, and little novels which come out every day, and are talked of for a few days with as much eagerness as a new fashion in other places."

She did not yet realize, after quite a stay in Paris, why gossip was suppressed, and the whole style of conversation was so carefully guarded. The "*patte de velours*" of Napoleon was felt by the Parisians; and, though sheathed temporarily, his talons were too evident to permit of any real freedom of thought or language. Before the close of these very pleasant months in Paris, she could have better explained the absence of any thing like a personal element in the conversation.

Many of Miss Edgeworth's critics have thought her wanting in tenderness, and in the delineation of the power and influence of love on the human heart,

and its share in the events of life. It is not usually known that she was a person of the most affectionate, warm-hearted, and tender nature. Her tears and smiles rose easily at any tale of distress or mirth, but she was not lightly or easily influenced by fictitious suffering. Her clear mind and cultivated intellect gave her a strong control over her own feelings; but she was human, and vulnerable, as every true woman should be, to the influence of love. In Paris she met often a Swedish gentleman, M. Edelcrantz; and it was an offer from him which caused her to write as follows: —

"Here, my dear aunt [Mrs. Ruxton], I was interrupted in a manner that will surprise you as much as it surprised me, by the coming in of M. Edelcrantz, a Swedish gentleman, whom we have mentioned to you, of superior understanding and mild manners: he came to offer me his hand and heart!

"My heart, you may suppose, cannot return his attachment; for I have seen but little of him, and have not had time to have formed any judgment, except that I think nothing could tempt me to leave my own dear friends and my own country to live in Sweden."

To another relation she wrote, —

"I take it for granted, my dear friend, that you have by this time seen a letter which I wrote a few days ago to my aunt. To you, as to her, every thought of my mind is open. I persist in refusing to leave my country and my friends to live at the court of Stockholm; and he tells me (of course) that there is nothing he would not sacrifice for me, except his duty. He has been all his life

in the service of the king of Sweden, has places under him, and is actually employed in collecting information for a large political establishment. He thinks himself bound in honor to finish what he has begun. He says he should not fear the ridicule or blame that would be thrown upon him by his countrymen, for quitting his country at his age, but that he should despise himself if he abandoned his duty for any passion. This is all very reasonable, but reasonable for him only, not for me; and I have never felt any thing for him but esteem and gratitude."

Mrs. Edgeworth wrote of this event, —

"Maria was mistaken as to her own feelings. She refused M. Edelcrantz, but she felt much more for him than esteem and admiration: she was exceedingly in love with him. Mr. Edgeworth left her to decide for herself; but she saw too plainly what it would be to us to lose her, and what she would feel at parting from us. She decided rightly for her own future happiness and for that of her family; but she suffered much at the time, and long afterwards. While we were at Paris, I remember that in a shop, where Charlotte and I were making some purchases, Maria sat apart absorbed in thought, and so deep in revery that when her father came in and stood opposite to her she did not see him till he spoke to her, when she started, and burst into tears. She was grieved by his look of tender anxiety: and she afterwards exerted herself to join in society, and to take advantage of all that was agreeable during our stay in France, and on our journey home; but it was often a most painful effort to her. And even after her return to Edgeworthstown, it was long before she recovered the elasticity of her mind. She exerted all her powers of self-command, and turned

her attention to every thing her father suggested for her to write. But 'Leonora,' which she began immediately after our return home, was written with the hope of pleasing the Chevalier Edelcrantz: it was written in a style he liked; and the idea of what he would think of it was, I believe, present to her in every page she wrote. She never heard that he had even read it. From the time they parted at Paris, there was no sort of communication between them; and, beyond the chance which brought us sometimes into company with travellers who had been in Sweden, or the casual mention of M. Edelcrantz in the newspapers or scientific journals, we never heard more of one who had been of such supreme interest to her, and to us all, at Paris, and of whom Maria continued to have, all her life, the most romantic recollection. I do not think she ever repented of her refusal or regretted her decision: she was well aware that she could not have made him happy, that she would not have suited his position at the court of Stockholm, and that her want of beauty might have diminished his attachment. It was better, perhaps, that she should think so, as it calmed her mind; but, from what I saw of M. Edelcrantz, I think he was a man capable of deeply valuing her. I believe that he was much attached to her, and deeply mortified at her refusal. He continued to reside in Sweden after the abdication of his master, and was always distinguished for his high character and great abilities. He never married. He was, except very fine eyes, remarkably plain. Her father rallied Maria about her preference of so ugly a man; but she liked the expression of his countenance, the spirit and strength of his character, and his very able conversation. The unexpected mention of his name, or even that of Sweden, in a book or newspaper, always moved her so much that

the words and lines in the page became a mass of confusion before her eyes, and her voice lost all power.

"I think it right to mention these facts, because I know that the lessons of self-command which she inculcated in her novels were really acted upon in her own life, and that the resolution with which she devoted herself to her father and her family, and the industry with which she labored at the writings which she thought were for the advantage of her fellow-creatures, were from the exertion of the highest principle. Her precepts were not the maxims of cold-hearted prudence, but the result of her own experience in strong and romantic feeling. By what accident it happened that she had, long before she ever saw the Chevalier Edelcrantz, chosen Sweden for the scene of 'The Knapsack,' I do not know; but I remember his expressing his admiration of that beautiful little piece, and his pleasure in the fine characters of the Swedish gentlemen and peasants."

This is an exceedingly interesting passage; because it does show clearly, as Mrs. Edgeworth says, that Maria was capable of the deepest feelings. Many critics have accused her of being cold, prudent, and calculating. Cold, the writer of "Patronage," with the beautiful womanly character of Caroline Percy, could never have been. She was denied the happiness of the sweetest relations of domestic life: the tender joys of wife and mother were not to be hers, but it did cost her many struggles to give up bravely the possibility of such happiness. She showed so plainly by her lifelong devotion to a living father, and regard for his memory when gone; by sympathetic interest in her own brothers and sisters, the

many other children and the wives of her father,—what she was capable of feeling, that one cannot doubt her capacity for loving. She drew too many portraits of lovely women in all the relations of life, as maid, wife, and widow, to leave a shadow of uncertainty as to her genuine belief in marriage. It is hard "to look into happiness through another man's eyes," says Shakspeare. Maria did this all her life, and the wonder is, that she depicted so delicately, yet charmingly, the effect of love on so many characters. She does it admirably in "Patronage," where she contrasts the volatile Rosamond, under the influence of the tender passion, with her high-spirited yet tender sister Caroline. Both love, and are wooed and won; but how different the wooing! how characteristic the sentiments of the lively Rosamond, with her vivacity and redoubled life, and the calm, deep happiness of the well-balanced mind and the sympathetic yet self-contained nature of Caroline! While Rosamond is steadied and improved by her love for Mr. Henry, the noble nature of Caroline finds its perfect finish in the happiness of loving and being loved by Count Altenburg.

When Maria painted Caroline Percy struggling to control what she supposed was a hopeless passion for Count Altenburg, she probably drew these pages from her own experience. The fate of her heroine was happier, however, than her own. Her lover did not return to her, and they never met again.

CHAPTER IX.

Maria visits La Harpe. — Mr. Edgeworth ordered to leave Paris. — Maria goes with him to Passy. — He receives Permission to return. — A Visit to Mme. de Genlis. — Rumors of War. — Departure from Paris. — London. — York. — Edinburgh. — Society there. — Dugald Stewart. — Dr. Alison. — Dr. Gregory. — Professor Playfair. — Elizabeth Hamilton — Maria's Enjoyment of Edinburgh. — A Visit to Glasgow on their Way to Ireland.

Among other visits to notable people, Maria went to the house of La Harpe, the poet, with Mme. Récamier and the Russian Princess Dalgourski, to hear him repeat some of his own poetry.

"He lives in a wretched house; and we went up dirty stairs, through dirty passages, where I wondered how fine ladies' trains and noses could go, and were received in a dark, small den by the philosopher, or rather *dévot*, for he spurns the philosopher. He was in a dirty reddish night-gown, and very dirty night-cap bound round the forehead by a superlatively dirty chocolate-colored ribbon. Mme. Récamier, the beautiful, the elegant, robed in white satin trimmed with white fur, seated herself on the elbow of his armchair, and besought him to repeat his verses."

In another place she speaks of Mme. Récamier as, "a graceful and *decent* beauty of excellent character." When, long after this time, her brother wrote her that he made Mme. Récamier laugh, by some remark of his, Maria replied, —

"In my observation she never went beyond the smile prescribed by Lord Chesterfield as graceful in beauty."

When Mr. Edgeworth was arranging in London for his Parisian life, he asked for, and obtained, a letter from Lord Essex, then lord chamberlain, and applied to Lord Whitworth, then English ambassador at Paris, to present him to Napoleon. After a stay in Paris, he was convinced by various signs that Gen. Bonaparte, then First Consul, was carefully preparing his course for the usurpation of supreme power in France. This altered Mr. Edgeworth's feelings: he did not care to go to the court of the usurper. Though he was prudent in conversation, and in the friendships he formed and the houses he frequented, there was a system of *espionnage* in Paris which kept Napoleon acquainted with the thoughts and speech of strangers as well as residents. Mr. Edgeworth "could scarcely be brought to believe" in the existence of such a police-system, till he was convinced by "well-attested facts produced to him, and till he perceived the suspicion and excessive caution and constraint which the system spread over general society." This was the reason for the peculiar tone of conversation in the *salons*. Maria did not fully comprehend the situation of affairs in Paris, until seen in the light of after events.

Mr. Edgeworth had no apprehensions whatever of attracting the police spies by either action or word; but "he was one morning surprised by an order to quit Paris in twenty-four hours, and the

French territories in fifteen days." Accompanied by Maria, he went to Passy. The following extract from a letter to Miss Charlotte Sneyd will tell the story of the mistake which caused his arrest. He described in detail all the particulars of his arrest, and the kindness of his friends, the Delesserts, Mme. Gautier, and others. It was true kindness, for it exposed them to the censure of the police for aiding a suspected person. Refusing all offers of help, fearing to compromise these good friends, Mr. Edgeworth went into lodgings at Passy.

[To Mrs. Charlotte Sneyd.]

PARIS, Jan. 27, 1803.

. . . We arrived at Passy about ten o'clock at night; and, though a *déporté*, I slept tolerably well. Before I was up, my friend M. de P—— was with me, breakfasted with us in our little oven of a parlor, conversed two hours most agreeably. Our other friend, F. D., came also before we had breakfasted; and just as I had mounted on a table to paste some paper over certain deficiencies in the window, enter M. P——, and Le B——n.

"Mon ami, ce n'est pas la peine!" cried they both at once, their faces *rayonnant de joie*. "You need not give yourself so much trouble, you will not stay here long. We have seen the grand juge, and your detention arises from a mistake. It was supposed that you are a brother to the Abbé Edgeworth. We are to deliver a petition from you, stating what your relationship to the abbé really is. This shall be backed by an address signed by all your friends at Paris, and you will then be at liberty to return."

I objected to writing any petition; and at all events, I determined to consult my ambassador, who had conducted himself well towards me. I wrote to Lord Whitworth, stating the facts, and declaring that nothing could ever make me deny the honor of being related to the Abbé Edgeworth. Lord Whitworth advised me, however, to state the fact that I was not the abbé's brother.

Maria says, —

"In the evening of the second day of my father's *banishment* from Paris, our friends informing Mrs. Edgeworth of the permission granted him to return, she came to Passy for us at seven o'clock in the evening. Late as it was when we got to Paris, he stopped at the English ambassador's hotel to tell him the result of the business.

"At a public court dinner, at which Regnier, the *grand juge*, was present, some days after this affair, one of our friends spoke of it, and questioned him as to his *real* reasons. He declared he had none, but excused himself by saying that Paris was too full of strangers, and that he had general orders to clear it of *la lie du peuple étranger;* to which our friend replied that, 'M. le Grand Juge should, however, distinguish between *la lie* and *l'élite du peuple.*' . . .

"The memorial which our Parisian friends drew up to present to the *grand juge*, stated 'that my father was a man of letters, that we were authors of a work on education well known in France, that he had lived, ever since he came to Paris, with literary society, totally unconnected with politics.' Some kind and highly gratifying expressions were added: several celebrated names of the highest respectability were subscribed. After the business was over, the memorial was put into my father's hand, and has been, and will be, carefully preserved by

his family, as a testimony of the steadiness of our Parisian friends."

The last important events of interest in the stay of the Edgeworths at Paris, after the arrest and release of Mr. Edgeworth, were a visit to the establishment of Mme. Campan, where they saw many distinguished people, among them Hortense Beauharnais, and Mme. Louis Bonaparte, the unfortunate queen of Holland, who was an *élève* of Mme. Campan's. Racine's "Esther," and Mme. de Genlis's beautiful "Rosière de Salency," were admirably performed by the pupils.

"Full of the pleasure" received from seeing her play, Miss Edgeworth, though evidently strongly prejudiced against Mme. de Genlis,[1] "was impatient" to pay her a visit before leaving. When in England Maria did not visit her, as the feeling against her manner of life was such, that, when Mr. Edgeworth took Maria's translation of "Adèle et Théodore" to her at Bath, he meant to present its translator, Maria, also to her, but found "that she is not visited by demoiselles in England," writes Maria, in 1791, from Clifton to Mrs. Ruxton. But Maria was older now than she was then; and, besides, she probably thought that at Paris she could do as the Parisians do; and they went by special invitation one evening. And here is her own description of the difficulties and the

[1] Genlis, Stéphanie Félicité, Comtesse de, born in Burgundy, 1746; died in 1830. Notorious for her connection with Philippe Égalité. She educated Louis Philippe. She published numerous books on many subjects.

final result, and her impressions of this notorious woman: —

"She was living where Sully used to live, at the Arsenal. Bonaparte has given her apartments there. Now, I do not know what you imagined in reading Sully's Memoirs: but I always imagined that the Arsenal was one large building, with a façade to it like a very large hotel or a palace; and I fancied it was somewhere in the middle of Paris. On the contrary, it was quite in the suburbs. We drove on and on; and at last we came to a heavy archway, like what you see at the entrance of a fortified town. We drove under it for the length of three or four yards in total darkness; and then we found ourselves, as well as we could see by the light of some dim lamps, in a large square court, surrounded by buildings: here we thought we were to alight. No such thing: the coachman drove under another thick archway, lighted at the entrance by a single lamp. We found ourselves in another court; and still we went on, archway after archway, court after court, in all which reigned desolate silence. I thought the archways and the courts and the desolate silence would never end. At last the coachman stopped, and asked, for the tenth time, where the lady lived. It is excessively difficult to find people in Paris. We thought the name of Mme. de Genlis and the Arsenal would have been sufficient; but the whole of this congregation of courts and gateways and houses is called the Arsenal, and hundreds and hundreds of people inhabit it who are probably perfect strangers to Mme. de Genlis. At the doors where our coachman inquired, some answered that they knew nothing of her, some that she lived in the Faubourg St. Germain, others believed that she might be at Passy, others had heard that she had apartments given

her by government somewhere in the Arsenal, but could not tell where. While the coachman thus begged his way, we, anxiously looking out at him from the middle of the great square where we were left, listened for the answers that were given, and which often, from the distance, escaped our ears. At last a door pretty near to us opened, and our coachman's head and hat were illuminated by the candle held by the person who opened the door; and, as the two figures parted with each other, we could distinctly see the expression of their countenances, and their lips move: the result of this parley was successful. We were directed to the house where Mme. de Genlis lived, and thought all difficulties ended. No such thing: her apartments were still to be sought for. We saw before us a large, crooked, ruinous stone staircase, lighted by a single bit of candle, hanging in a vile tin lantern, in an angle of the bare wall at the turn of the staircase, — only just light enough to see that the walls were bare and old, and the stairs immoderately dirty. There were no signs of the place being inhabited, except this lamp, which could not have been lighted without hands. I stood still in melancholy astonishment, while my father groped his way into a kind of porter's lodge, or den, at the foot of the stairs, where he found a man who was porter to various people who inhabited this house. You know, the Parisian houses are inhabited by hordes of different people; and the stairs are in fact streets, and dirty streets, to their dwellings. The porter, who was neither obliging nor intelligent, carelessly said that '*Mme. de Genlis logeait au seconde à gauche, qu'il foudrait tirer sa sonnette.*'' He believed she was at home, if she was not gone out. Up we went by ourselves; for this porter, though we were strangers, and pleaded that we were so, never offered to stir a step to guide or to light us. When

we got to the second stage, we faintly saw, by the light from the one candle at the first landing-place, two large dirty folding-doors, one set on the right and the other on the left, and hanging on each a bell, no larger than what you see in the small parlor of a small English inn. My father pulled one bell, and waited some minutes; no answer: pulled the other bell and waited; no answer: thumped at the left door; no answer: pushed and pulled at it, — could not open it; pushed open one of the right-hand folding-doors, — utter darkness; went in, as well as we could feel; there was no furniture. After we had been there a few seconds, we could discern the bare walls, and some strange lumber in one corner. The room was of a prodigious height, like an old playhouse. We retreated, and, in despair, went down again to the stupid or surly porter. He came up-stairs very unwillingly, and pointed to a deep recess between the stairs and folding-doors. '*Allez, voila la porte et tirer la sonnette.*' He and his candle went down; and my father had but just time to seize the handle of the bell, when we were again in darkness. After ringing this feeble bell, we presently heard doors open, and little footsteps approaching nigh. The door was opened by a girl of about Honora's size, holding an ill-set waning candle in her hand, the light of which fell full upon her face and figure; her face was remarkably intelligent, — dark sparkling eyes; dark hair, curled in the most fashionable long cork-screw ringlets over her eyes and cheeks. She parted the ringlets to take a full view of us, and we were equally impatient to take a full view of her. The dress of her figure by no means suited the head and the elegance of her attitude. What her 'nether weeds' might be, we could not distinctly see: but they seemed to be a coarse, short petticoat, like what Molly Bristow's children would wear, not on Sundays;

a woollen gray spencer above, pinned with a single pin by the lapels tight across the neck under the chin, and open all below. After surveying us, and hearing that our name was Edgeworth, she smiled graciously, and bid us follow her, saying, '*Mamam est chez elle.*' She led the way, with the grace of a young lady who has been taught to dance, across two ante-chambers, miserable looking, but, miserable or no, no house in Paris can be without them. The girl, or young lady, for we were still in doubt which to think her, led us into a small room, in which the candles were so well screened by a green tin screen, that we could scarcely distinguish the tall form of a lady in black, who rose from her armchair by the fireside as the door opened. A great puff of smoke came from the huge fireplace at the same moment. She came forward; and we made our way towards her as well as we could through a confusion of tables, chairs, and work-baskets, china, writing-desks and ink-stands and bird-cages and a harp. She did not speak; and, as her back was now turned to both fire and candle, I could not see her face, or any thing but the outline of her form, and her attitude: her form was the remains of a fine form, and her attitude that of a woman used to a better drawing-room. I being foremost, and she silent, was compelled to speak to the figure in darkness: 'Mme. de Genlis nous a fait l'honneur de nous mander qu'elle voulait bien nous permettre de lui rendre visite, et de lui offrir nos respects,' said I, or words to that effect; to which she replied by taking my hand, and saying something in which '*charmée*' was the most intelligible word. Whilst she spoke, she looked over my shoulder at my father, whose bow, I presume, told her he was a gentleman; for she spoke to him immediately, as if she wished to please, and seated us in fauteuils near the fire.

"I then had a good view of her face and figure: she looked like the full-length picture of my great-great-grandmother Edgeworth you may have seen in the garret, very thin and melancholy, but her face not so handsome as my great-grandmother's; dark eyes, long sallow cheeks, compressed thin lips, two or three black ringlets on a high forehead, a cap that Mrs. Suier might wear, — altogether an appearance of fallen fortunes, worn-out health, and excessive but guarded irritability. To me there was nothing of that engaging, captivating manner which I had been taught to expect by many, even of her enemies: she seemed to me to be alive only to literary quarrels and jealousies; the muscles of her face as she spoke, or as my father spoke to her, quickly and too easily expressed hatred and anger whenever any not of her own party were mentioned.

"She is now your *dévoté acharnement*. When I mentioned with some enthusiasm the good Abbé Morellet, who has written so courageously in favor of the French exiled nobility and their children, she answered in a sharp voice, 'Oui, c'est un homme de beaucoup d'esprit, à ce qu'on dit, à ce qui je crois même, mais il faut vous apprendre qu'il n'est pas des *notres*.'

"My father spoke of Pamela,[1] Lady Edward Fitzgerald, and explained how he had defended her in the Irish House of Commons. Instead of being touched or pleased, her mind instantly diverged into an elaborate and artificial exculpation of Lady Edward and herself; proving, or attempting to prove, that she never knew any of her husband's plans, that she utterly disapproved of them, at least of all she suspected of them. This defence was quite lost upon us, who never thought of attacking; but Mme. de Genlis seems to have been so much used to be

[1] Her daughter.

attacked that she has defences and apologies, ready prepared, suited to all possible occasions.

"She spoke of Mme. de Staël's 'Delphine' with detestation, of another new and fashionable novel 'Amelie' with abhorrence, and kissed my forehead twice because I had not read it, 'Vous autres anglaises vous êtes modestes!'

"Where was Mme. de Genlis's sense of delicacy, when she penned and published 'Les Chevaliers du Cigne'? Forgive me, my dear aunt Mary, you begged me to see her with favorable eyes; and I went to see her after seeing her 'Rosière de Salency' with the most favorable disposition, but I could not like her: there was something of malignity in her countenance and conversation that repelled love, and of hypocrisy, which annihilated esteem; and from time to time I saw, or thought I saw, through the gloom of her countenance, a gleam of coquetry.

"But my father judges much more favorably of her than I do: she evidently took pains to please him; and he says he is sure she is a person over whose mind he could gain great ascendency.[1] He thinks her a woman of violent passions, unbridled imagination, and ill-tempered, but not malevolent, — one who has been so torn to pieces that she now turns upon her enemies, and longs to tear in her turn. He says she has certainly great powers of pleasing, though I neither saw nor felt them. But you know, dear aunt, that I am not famous for judging sanely of strangers on a first visit; and I might be prejudiced or mortified by Mme. de Genlis assuring me that she had never read any thing of mine except 'Belinda,' had heard of 'Practical Education,' had heard it much praised, but

[1] This observation of Mr. Edgeworth's shows quite clearly the intense egotism of the man. He evidently scored this fact in favor of Mme. de Genlis.

had never seen it. She has just published an additional volume of her 'Petits Romans,' in which there are some beautiful stories: but you must not expect another 'Mlle. de Clermont;' one such story in an age is as much as we can reasonably expect.

"I had almost forgotten to tell you that the little girl who showed us in is a girl whom she is educating, '*Elle m'appelle mamam, mais elle n'est pas ma fille.*' The manner in which this little girl spoke to Mme. de Genlis, and looked at her, appeared more in her favor than any thing else. She certainly spoke to her with freedom and fondness, and without any affectation. I went to look at what the child was writing: she was translating Darwin's 'Zoonomia.' I read some of her translation: it was excellent. She was, I think she said, ten years old.

"It is certain that Mme. de Genlis made the present Duke of Orleans such an excellent mathematician, that when he was, during his emigration, in distress for bread, he taught mathematics as a professor in one of the German universities. If we could see or converse with one of her pupils, and hear what they think of her, we should be able to form a better judgment of her than from all that her books and enemies say for or against her. I say her *books*, not her *friends*, and enemies; for I fear she has no friends to plead for her, except her books. I never met with one of any party who was her friend. This strikes me with real melancholy, to see a woman of the first talents in Europe, who has lived and shone in the gay courts of the gayest nation in the world, now deserted and forlorn, living in wretched lodgings, with some of the pictures and finery, the wreck of her fortunes, before her eyes, without society, without a single friend, admired — and despised: she lives literally in spite, not in pity. Her cruelty in drawing a profligate character of the queen

after the execution, in the 'Chevaliers du Cigne;' her taking her pupils at the beginning of the Revolution to revolutionary clubs; her connection with the late Duke of Orleans, and her hypocrisy about it; her insisting upon being governess to his children, when the duchess did not wish it; and its being supposed that it was she who instigated the duke in all his horrible conduct; and, more than all the rest, her own attacks and *apologies*, — have brought her into all this isolated state of reprobation."

The extremely unpleasant adventure of Mr. Edgeworth with the secret police of Paris, his arrest, and banishment from Paris for forty-eight hours, were not easily forgotten by him. The spring was advancing, the society was delightful, and his French friends begged him to make a longer stay with them. Before the disagreeable affair of the arrest, he had been in treaty for a house formerly belonging to Garat, in what was then a most charming part of Paris, near the *Jardins du Luxembourg:* he had resolved to send for the children he left in Ireland, and live in Paris for two years, partly for the social and literary advantages, and also for the excellent facilities of instruction from masters for his children. He was, however, fortunate in his decision to leave France. The arrest shook his confidence in the apparent peace: he had the foresight and caution to return to England in time to prevent being a *détenu*, as many foreigners were. His eldest son Lovell had the misfortune to be arrested, and he spent eleven years of exile in France: six years of that time were passed at Verdun. At the first rumors of war, Mr. Edge-

worth wrote to warn his son of the impending danger, but this letter was never received.

Their good friend M. Le Breton, one of the officers of the Mint at the time, of whom Maria always spoke with affectionate remembrance, was the person who warned Mr. Edgeworth that war was approaching. In a call he made at their lodgings, he agreed with him, that, if the intentions of Bonaparte were hostile to England, he would that night on meeting them at a friend's *salon*, give him distinct information by suddenly putting on his hat. They visited their friend, met Le Breton, who suddenly clapped his hat on his head in an absent-minded manner, and Mr. Edgeworth profited by the hint. They left Paris as quickly as they could arrange after this. Le Breton had agreed, that, if any thing happened to change the determination, Bonaparte had expressed for war, he would write a letter, and conclude it with the following words: "*Mes hommages à la charmante Mlle. Charlotte.*" If the hope of peace was not to be realized, and their return from London would be prevented, he was to omit the word "*charmante.*" He ended the letter, which for safety had not the slightest allusion to politics or affairs of importance, with "*Mes hommages à Mlle. Charlotte;*" and they left London for Edinburgh without delay.

Maria writes, —

"On our return to England, we heard such an account of the declining health of my brother Henry, who was then at Edinburgh, as determined my father to go immedi-

ately to see him, and to bring him home with us to the milder climate of Ireland.

"We went to Scotland in the spring of 1803, found Henry's health and spirits better than we had expected."

The Edgeworths arrived in Edinburgh on March 19, and passed several delightful weeks there. On their way from London, they staid at York a day, to visit the minster. Having received from Lindley Murray some new books through Mr. Johnson, the bookseller, they went to see him. Maria writes, —

"We were told that he lived about a mile from York, and in the evening we drove to see him. A very neat-looking house, — door opened by a pretty Quaker maid-servant, shown into a well-furnished parlor, cheerful fire, every thing bespeaking comfort and happiness. On a sofa, at the farther end of the room, was seated, quite upright, a Quaker-looking man in a pale-brown coat, who never attempted to rise from his seat to receive us, but held out his hand, and with a placid, benevolent smile, said, 'You are most welcome. I am heartily glad to see you. It is my misfortune that I cannot rise from my seat; but I must be as I am, as I have been these eighteen years.' He had lost the use of one arm and side, and cannot walk, — not paralytic, but from the effects of a fever. Such mild, cheerful resignation, such benevolence of manner and countenance, I never saw in any human being. He writes solely with the idea of doing good to his fellow-creatures. 'He wants nothing in this life,' he says, 'neither fortune or fame;' and he seems to forget that he wants health. He says, 'I have so many blessings!' His wife, who seemed to love and admire 'my husband' as the first and best of human beings, gave us excellent tea and abundance of good cake."

They reached Edinburgh without any remarkable adventures; and Maria, in continuing her narrative, says, —

"To Mrs. Dugald Stewart's maternal care, and to Mrs. Alison's, we owe it, that Henry got through two severe seasons in Scotland, and that a few years longer of his life were preserved.

"We spent some weeks with him, and among his friends at Edinburgh, in delightful society. The evening parties at Lothian House appeared to us (then fresh from Paris) the most happy mixture of men of letters, of men of science, and of people of the world, that we had ever seen.

. . . "Imagine the pleasure he felt at being introduced to them by his son, and in hearing Gregory, Alison, Playfair, Dugald Stewart, speak of Henry as if he actually belonged to themselves, and with the most affectionate regard.

"From the time he came to Edinburgh to the hour he left it,[1] Henry was received at Lothian House, where Mr. and Mrs. D. Stewart then resided, as if he had been one of their own family."

A sketch of the society at Edinburgh, at this date, would present a really remarkable combination of scientific, literary, and cultivated people. "Plain living and high thinking" were the order of the day in the beautiful old city of Edinburgh. The names of Dr. Gregory, Rev. Mr. Alison, and the intelligent professors of the university, among whom may be especially named Professors Stewart and Playfair,

[1] He went to Madeira some time afterwards, but he was never restored to health. He died at Clifton in 1813.

gave lustre to the society they frequented. The university numbered at this time about two thousand students, drawn from the best families in the United Kingdom. The French Revolution, and the wars which followed it, had closed the Continent against travellers and students, and swelled the ranks of the students at the Scottish universities; for the professors were men of note.

Then, too, many of the northern-border county families, and the lesser nobility of Scotland, who were wont to make York their winter resort, began to be attracted by the charms of the Scotch city. These were palmy days for "Edinboro' town." Always romantically beautiful, Edinburgh became preeminently the home of genius and learning at this season of her prime. It will be remembered that "The Edinburgh Review" was not as yet in existence, and Jeffrey was known only as a clever lawyer.

Sir Walter Scott still held the respectable office of writer to the signet, in common with many of his professional brethren. He was, however, beginning to be known somewhat among literary people by his translations of poetry from the German, and his edition of the "Border Minstrelsy." He had shown his powers of versification in the fine ballads of "The Eve of St. John," "Glenfinlas," and "The Grey Brother." Among these translations was that of Bürger's "Lenore." Mrs. Barbauld carried the version of William Taylor of Norwich to Edinburgh on her visit in 1794, and read the lines to Dugald Stewart. He, in turn, recited what he could recall of these spirited lines to Scott. Sir Walter long after

assured Mrs. Barbauld that this translation first gave him inspiration, — made him a poet. It was not till 1805, that "The Lay of the Last Minstrel" appeared.

Among the northern lights above the horizon, the names of the distinguished men already mentioned shone with brilliancy. Fair and clever women added their charms to the social atmosphere. Lord Cockburn says of the society of Edinburgh, —

"It was not that of a provincial town, and cannot be judged of by any such standard. It was metropolitan. Trade or manufactures have, fortunately, never marked this city for their own. The closing of the Continent sent many excellent English families and youths to us for education and for pleasure. The war brightened us with uniforms and strange, sad shows.

"Over all this, there was diffused the influence of a greater number of persons attached to literature and science — some as their calling, and some for pleasure — than could be found, in proportion to the population, in any other city in the empire."

The Edgeworths felt very deeply the kindness of the Stewarts and Alisons to Henry. They formed friendships at this time with the Stewarts, Alisons, Playfairs, Gregorys, and Miss Elizabeth Hamilton, which were life-long. Maria delighted in the society of these cultivated and friendly people. There were many others, whose names cannot be mentioned, who vied with each other in courtesy and friendly attentions to the Edgeworths.

Mr. Stewart, during a considerable part of his career as professor in the University of Edinburgh,

received into his house young men of rank and fortune, whom the state of Continental affairs prevented from studying abroad. They were drawn to the university by the reputation it had acquired as a philosophical and scientific school. Many of these young men were destined by their rank and talents to widely spread the influence of Dugald Stewart. Among the numerous inmates of Mr. Stewart's house at various times may be named Lord Aucram (afterwards Marquis of Lothian), Basil, Lord Daer, Lord Powerscourt, Lord Ashburton, Lord Brook (Earl of Warwick), Mr. Ward (afterwards Lord Ward and Dudley), Viscount Palmerston, and Lord Temple his brother. Among the students, the name of Lord Lansdowne, the friend of Miss Edgeworth, comes to the memory. Lord Webb Seymour, Sir Thomas Dyke Ackland, and Sir Robert Inglis may be mentioned. Sir James Mackintosh said truly of Dugald Stewart's lectures, that the peculiar glory of his eloquence rested in its having "*breathed the love of virtue into whole generations of pupils.*"

The character and philosophical reputation of Professor Stewart rendered his house the resort of the best society of the city.

"He exercised a remarkable ascendency over minds of the finer kind, but especially cultivated men in the higher grades of society; of polished and courteous, but perfectly unobtrusive manners, in an eminent sense the gentleman and the scholar, — his higher and less obvious accomplishments obtained a ready recognition in circles where, without adventitious aid, his influence would have been greatly less powerful. Mrs. Stewart, moreover, by

her accomplishments, and a wonderful power of attaching friends, was fitted to become the centre of a brilliant circle. Their weekly re-unions, which happily blended the aristocracies of rank and letters, bringing together the peer and the unfriended scholar, were for many years the source of an influence that most beneficially affected the society of the capital. These meetings, moreover, embraced, even when political zeal was at its highest, men of varied shades of opinion; and thus contributed not a little to soothe the bitterness of party feeling in Edinburgh.''

Col. Stewart, in referring to this period, speaks in his memoir of his father's house, "as the resort of all who were most distinguished for genius, acquirements, or elegance in Edinburgh, and of all foreigners who were led to visit the capital of Scotland." "So happily," he adds, "did he succeed in assorting his guests, that his evening parties possessed a charm which many who frequented them have since confessed they sought in vain in more splendid and insipid entertainments."

Maria was charmed with Dugald Stewart, and wrote, —

"Mr. Stewart is said to be naturally or habitually grave and reserved, but towards us he has broken through his habits or his nature; and I never conversed with any one with whom I was more at ease. He has a grave, sensible face, more like the head of Shakspeare than any other head or print that I can remember. I have not heard him lecture: no woman can go to the public lectures here; and I don't choose to go in men's or boys' clothes, or in the pocket of the Irish giant, though he is here, and well able

to carry me. Mrs. Stewart has been for years wishing in vain for the pleasure of hearing one of her husband's lectures."

Mrs. Dugald Stewart, says one who knew her well, "was a lady of high accomplishments and fascinating manners, — uniting to vivacity and humor, depth and tenderness of feeling. She sympathized warmly with the tastes and pursuits of her husband; and so great was the regard of the latter for her judgment, that he was in the habit of submitting to her criticism whatever he wrote."

For many years the Stewarts lived at Stewartfield House, in the neighborhood of Edinburgh; and afterwards they occupied Lothian House and Callendar House. Both these houses were situated in the lower part of the Canongate.

The name of Dr. Gregory, the kindly professional adviser and friend of Henry Edgeworth, recalls a family famous in the annals of science in Scotland. It is stated in Chalmers's "Biographical Dictionary," that no less than sixteen of this family have held British professorships. The name of Gregory has been distinguished in scientific research since the middle of the seventeenth century. The Dr. Gregory who was professor at Edinburgh at this time was James G. Gregory (the third). He was an able practising physician, lecturer, and the author of "Philosophical and Literary Essays."

Professor John Playfair, who held the joint professorship of mathematics with Adam Ferguson from 1785, and received the position of professor of natu-

ral philosophy in 1805, was a man of great ability. Socially, also, he was agreeable. Lockhart, in "Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk," describes "this fine old Archimedes with his reposed demeanor," and tells how genially the great mathematician played games and jumped at Craig Crook with Jeffrey, Leslie, and others. The little owner, Jeffrey himself, was "quite miraculous, considering his brevity of stride." When Mr. Lockhart compared Professor Playfair to the peripatetic philosopher, he writes, —

"He took what I said with great suavity; and, indeed, I have never seen a better specimen of that easy hilarity and good-humor, which sits with so much gracefulness on an honored old age."

Jeffrey said of Playfair, that he "possessed in the highest degree all the characteristics, both of a fine and a powerful understanding; at once penetrating and vigilant, but more distinguished by the caution and success of its march, than by the brilliancy or rapidity of its movements."

In naming the friends made at this time, that of Dr. Alison, the brilliant preacher and amiable divine, must not be forgotten. He was a native of Edinburgh; and after a long residence in England, where he held several church preferments, — among others a prebendal stall at Salisbury, and the perpetual curacy of Kenley in Shropshire, — he returned to his native city, where he officiated to the great enjoyment and benefit of his hearers, in a chapel, for many years. He is now principally known by the memory

of his eloquence as an orator, and his "Essays on the Natures and Principles of Taste."

Maria met in Edinburgh a very agreeable literary woman, — Miss Elizabeth Hamilton. This lady was Irish by birth, but a resident of the sister kingdom, with the exception of visits to Ireland. Miss Benger, her biographer, says of her friendship with Maria, it was "during this season (1803) Miss Hamilton became acquainted with Miss Edgeworth, who was introduced to her at Edinburgh, and with whom at the first interview she was pleased, at the second, charmed; proceeding in regular gradation through the progressive sentiments of cordiality, attachment, and affection." Miss Hamilton made a three-months' visit in Ireland in 1813, and then went to Edgeworthstown. Miss Edgeworth, on her part, was pleased with Miss Hamilton, and "justly observed that sound good sense which so eminently characterized Miss Hamilton's writings." Miss Hamilton enjoyed the gay and cheerful disposition of Maria. She "has truly observed, that *she* loved the young: she delighted to excite their smiles, and was ready to participate in their gayety." This was a delightful friendship. Miss Hamilton wrote several books intended for the young, and on the education of youth, besides "Letters of a Hindoo Rajah," "Memoirs of Agrippina," and "Memoirs of Modern Philosophers." She found, that to live in "cultivated society, whilst it refines taste, inevitably circumscribes invention."

After leaving their hospitable friends in Edinburgh, the Edgeworths visited Glasgow, on their way

to Ireland, and made the acquaintance of Professor Young, who then occupied the chair of Grecian literature at that university. They went to Ireland by Port Patrick, and visited Collon and Mr. Beaufort on their way. They also made a stay at Mrs. Ruxton's. After they left Edinburgh, Henry wrote Maria of the disappointment felt by Lord Buchan, who was ill in bed, and made a great effort to go to a party where Maria was expected, only to miss her. She answered, on hearing it, that she hoped "he would never do so any more."

CHAPTER X.

"Popular Tales."—"Emilie de Coulanges."—"Ennui."—"Leonora."—"Griselda."—Maria visits Black Castle.—Reading for "Professional Education."—Maria has a Severe Illness.—Reads "The Lay of the Last Minstrel."—Visits at Pakenham Hall and Castle Forbes.—"Leonora."—Visits to Friends in 1806.—Lady Morgan.—"Kitty Pakenham."—Visits from Friends.—Death of Charlotte Edgeworth.—Coolure.—Library and Garden at Edgeworthstown.—Disturbances among the Lower Classes.—A Natural Curiosity.—Work on "Professional Education."—Publication of this Book.

After their return to Edgeworthstown, Maria immediately occupied herself preparing for the press "Popular Tales," which were first published in this year. She also began "Emilie de Coulanges" and "Ennui," and wrote "Leonora," with the romantic purpose "of pleasing M. Edelcrantz." Mr. Francis Beaufort, afterwards Admiral Beaufort, was at Edgeworthstown in 1804; and Maria was pressed into the service, in common with the rest of the family, of copying out the vocabulary used by him in his telegraph, on which he was experimenting. But she found time to write "Griselda;" on which she amused herself with working in her own room, without telling any one of her occupation. When she had completed it, she sent it to Mr. Johnson, asking him to print a titlepage for a single copy, omitting her name, when he published the edition of the book. This he did;

and she had the pleasure of mystifying her father, without the unfortunate results of the same little joke which she played on Mrs. Ruxton, in allowing her to read "Belinda" as the work of an unknown author.

The following letter to Mrs. Barbauld will show the friendly relations which existed between the Edgeworths and that talented woman. There was quite an interchange of letters between them after this time.

JULY 22, 1804.

MY DEAR MADAM, — I will not trouble you with any commonplaces about time and distance and friendship; but taking it for granted that you are the same Mrs. Barbauld, and that I am the same Maria Edgeworth, who made acquaintance with each other in the year 1799, I proceed to mention a scheme of my father's. He thinks that a periodical paper, to be written entirely by ladies, would suceeed; and we wish that all the literary ladies of the present day might be invited to take a share in it. No papers to be rejected; each to be signed by the initial of the author's name; each to be inserted in the order in which it is received.

If you approve, tell us what would be the best method of proceeding. Would a paper in "The Monthly Magazine" put the business in train? Why cannot you, dear Mrs. Barbauld, prevail upon yourself to come to Ireland, or rather, why cannot *we* prevail upon you? We do not pretend to diminish the terrors of sea-sickness, but we could hope to balance a few hours of pain by some months of pleasure. We are vain enough to feel tolerably certain that you would be happy in the midst of a family united amongst themselves, who have, from their child-

hood, heard the name of Mrs. Barbauld with respect; and who, as they have grown up, have learned better and better to appreciate her merit.

Mrs. Edgeworth and my father join with me in every kind wish for your health and happiness, and we hope we have not lost our place in good Mr. Barbauld's esteem and affection. Believe me to be, my dear madam,

Your sincerely affectionate,

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, Sept. 23, 1804.

MY DEAR MADAM, — On my return home yesterday, I had the pleasure of your letter: my father would not forward it to me, but kept it, as he said, on purpose to increase my agreeable associations with home. It was indeed a great pleasure to receive such a letter from you. From the first moment that you professed a regard for us, I never could doubt of our holding a place in your esteem, so long as we remained unchanged; but, notwithstanding the steadiness of this belief, it was delightful to me to receive assurances, under your own hand and seal, that I was in the right. The freedom and affectionate warmth of your letter were peculiarly grateful to me; and though the praise you bestow on some of our works may be far beyond what your cool judgment would allow, yet I am perfectly well satisfied to find that in our cause your judgment is not cool. Is not it said of Pascal, that he wore a girdle of spikes, which he pressed into himself whenever he was conscious of any emotions of vanity? How deep they must have been pressed, if he had been praised by Mrs. Barbauld! For my part, I do not pretend to any ascetic humility, nor do I inflict upon myself the penance of abstinence from the refined delicacies of praise — especially when they are presented by a friend.

With respect to "The Lady's Paper," my father desires me to tell you, dear madam, that it was his proposal, not mine. I am glad that your objections have appeared to him satisfactory. I agree with you perfectly in thinking that to provoke a war with the other sex would be neither politic nor becoming in ours. Our literature should never be placed in competition with theirs, to plague them: it should be added to the common stock of amusement and happiness. To attempt to form a corps of literary women, where all would wish to be officers except those best suited to command, where there would be no discipline, and where, as you observe, the individuals might not choose to mess together, would be absurd and ridiculous.

As I was not at home when my father answered your letter, I am perhaps repeating the very things which he has said: but this you must excuse; for we are notorious for expressing the same ideas, often in the same words, at different ends of the same room.

To one thing in your letter, dear madam, I must object, even if my father has not dared to do so: I must remonstrate against your being only an occasional correspondent. I am not surprised that you should not like to bind yourself to feed the press with daily delicacies; but by proper economy and arrangements amongst the principal purveyors, you would never be exposed to this tremendous necessity. I hope, therefore, upon *second thoughts*, which Dr. Aikin will in this case allow to be best, you will consent to give credit to our *firm*, by placing your name foremost as the acting partner. We should rejoice to have the able and elegant assistance of Miss Aikin, of your brother, and of Mr. Rogers, Miss Baillie, and Mrs. Opie.

Do not imagine, dear Mrs. Barbauld, when I mention

the life of Richardson, that I am going to attempt that return of eulogium with which authors sometimes treat each other. You are quite above this traffic of bays; and, I hope, so am I. The eager interest with which I read the life of Richardson, you would have thought the most unequivocal testimony I could give of my liking it. My father, in jest, said that I was wildly anxious to read it, because it was the life of an author; but I knew that my interest in it arose from its being written by Mrs. Barbauld. I think I should be able to distinguish her style from that of any other female writer, by the ease, frequency, and felicity of its classical allusions, — allusions sufficiently intelligible to the unlearned, and which serve as freemason signs to the learned.

Though you have such an aversion to the sea, we do not yet give up the hopes of having you and Mr. Barbauld at Edgeworthstown. We shall expect you along with the blessings of peace. But when — is I fear in the bosom of emperors. In the mean time, dear madam, accept my greatful thanks for your kindness, and believe me with sincere esteem and admiration,

Affectionately yours,

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

Miss Seward, in writing her friend Miss Mary Powys, in 1804, gives a glimpse of Maria's sisters as calling on her when she visited Bristol. She writes "Maria" for Anna.

"Maria and Emmeline of Edgeworthstown, both settled in that city (Bristol), sought me with much kindness, and spoke with apparent delight of my attentions to them in their infancy, and of the hours they called happily spent beneath my father's roof. They have heard re-

cently from poor Lovell. Alas! he is still in the clutches of the detestable tyrant, Bonaparte, and complains heavily of the unwholesome climate of Verdun. Mrs. Beddoes is like her mother; but neither she nor her sister, Mrs. King, has any traces of their father. I thought them agreeable, but a few hours do not enable us to know if people talk from a reservoir or a spring. . . . I inquired after them on arriving at Mrs. Pennington's, but should not have sought them, uncertain of my reception, had they not sought me. The consciousness that they passed several years under the care of my soul's dear Honora gave me an unsuppressive interest in seeing and in listening to them. They drew back the curtains of the past."

In 1804 Maria made a visit in December and January to Black Castle. In February she wrote from home that she had been reading "*a power* of good books," and enumerates "Montesquieu sur la Grandeur et Decadence des Romains." In Dallas's "History of the Maroons," which she was studying for "Professional Education," a work in which she was helping her father, she found a hint for the plot of a comedy, which she proposed to prepare secretly for her father's birthday.

Maria was always busy with a little piece of work with which she occupied herself during hours of leisure from writing, or while she listened to reading aloud. These busy fingers wrought many a piece of embroidery or fine needlework, while the brain wove the web of fancies bright or serious; many a scene of lively dialogue, clever character-painting, or pathetic description passed into the clear words in

which it later appeared on the pages of tale or novel, while the hand was rapidly moving in some womanly bit of needlework. Faustus says, —

"Oh! what is intellect? — a strange, strange web;
How bright the embroidery, — but how dark the woof!"

The mind of Maria was not of this order: her embroidery of fancy was as cheerful as her handiwork. In 1805 she wrote to her brother Henry, who was then at Edinburgh, and in sending some messages says, —

"The worsted sleeves are for Mrs. Stewart, and you are to offer them to her. Nobody can say I do not know how to choose my ambassadors well! If Mrs. Stewart should begin to say, it is a pity Miss Edgeworth should spend her time at such work, please tell her that I like work very much, and that I have only done this at odd times; after breakfast, you know, when my father reads out of Pope's Homer, or when there are long sittings, when it is much more agreeable to move one's fingers, than to have to sit with hands crossed or clasped. I by no means accede to the doctrine that ladies cannot attend to any thing else when they are working: besides, it is contrary, is it not, to all the theories of 'Zoonomia'? Does not Dr. Darwin show that certain habitual motions go on without interrupting trains of thought; and do not common-sense and experience, whom I respect even above Dr. Darwin, show the same thing?"

In the spring of 1805 Maria had a severe illness, followed by a long and slow convalescence. While she was recovering from this illness, she was allowed to hear reading; and her sister read to her "The

Lay of the Last Minstrel," then just published, Lady Granard having kindly sent it to her. The appearance of that poem was an event in Maria's life, and from it dated her enthusiastic admiration and affectionate regard for Sir Walter Scott. At one bound Scott found himself famous in the literary arena. Sir James Mackintosh, in writing from Bombay, says, after a glowing expression of admiration, —

"On the whole, I have read nothing but Cowper's third volume, and Miss Edgeworth's 'Tales,' since I have left England, which has pleased me so much as the 'Lay.'"

Mr. Edgeworth visited London during the spring, having been summoned to give evidence as a witness in the case of his friend Judge Fox, before the House of Lords. While he was there, he wrote Maria of his having "*assisted*" at a *déjeuner*, given by the lady who was known as "Buff and Blue and Mrs. Crewe." She praised "To-morrow;" and he claimed in consideration thereof a song from her, "which is not easy to obtain, and got it."

During this summer Maria made pleasant visits, after her recovery from her illness, at Pakenham Hall and Castle Forbes. After her return Lady Elizabeth Pakenham sent her "a little pony, as quiet and almost as small as a dog, on which I go 'trit trot, trit trot;' but I hope it will never take into its head to add when we come to the stile, 'Skip we go over.'"

In writing about this time, Maria says she has

been very idle, "so idle that," she has "not yet finished 'Mme. de Fleury.' So Lord Henry Petty is chancellor of the exchequer, at twenty-four, on the pinnacle of glory!"

About the time her "Leonora" was preparing for publication, Mr. Edgeworth wrote to Maria: —

"Your critic, partner, father, friend, has finished your 'Leonora.' He has cut out a few pages; one or two letters are nearly untouched: the rest are cut, scrawled, and interlined without mercy. I make no doubt of the success of the book amongst *a certain class of readers;* PROVIDED it be reduced to one small volume, and provided it be polished *ad unguem*, so that neither flaw nor seam can be perceived by the utmost critical acumen. As it has no story to interest the curiosity, no comic to make the reader laugh, nor tragic to make him cry, it must depend upon the development of sentiment, the verisimilitude of character, and the elegance of style, which the higher classes of the literary world expect in such a performance, and may accept in lieu of fable and of excitement for their feelings. These you well know how to give, and your honest gratitude towards a favoring public will induce your accustomed industry to put the highest finish to the work. For this purpose, I advise you to revise it frequently, and look upon it as a promising infant committed to your care, which you are bound by many ties to educate, and bring out when it is fit to be presented. The design is worthy of that encouragement which you have always received: it rests on nature, truth, sound morality, and religion; and, if you polish it, it will sparkle in the regions of moral fashion. You will be surprised to hear that I have corrected more faults of style in this than in any thing I have ever corrected for

you. Your uncle Ruxton's criticisms have, except one, been adopted by me; and I hope, when you have corrected it again, he will have the goodness to revise it a second time."

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, Feb. 26, 1806.

MY DEAR MRS. BARBAULD, — Holcroft wrote the heads of the chapters in "Popular Tales:" he was employed by Johnson to correct the press. We were so much *scandalized* when we saw them that Johnson offered to conceal the whole impression. My father says I should not enter into long explanations about trifles, but I cannot help being anxious to assure you that those trite, vulgar sentences were not written by my father and preceptor. You will wonder why I should thus abruptly address my justification to you. My dear madam, we have just been reading a review, or rather an eulogium, of "Popular Tales," which, from the excellence of the writing and its generous warmth, we are persuaded could be written by no other but our friend Mrs. Barbauld. I never felt, and my father declares he never felt, so much pleasure from any praise: indeed, we never before received any of so high value, and from a judge whom we so much respect. We would rather have one grain of such praise than a hundred-weight of compliment from common critics.

I regret that I inserted in the "Modern Griselda" the offensive line from Chaucer. Let me assure you that this little tale was written in playfulness, not bitterness of heart. My father had often declared that he could not be imposed upon by me, but that he should know my writing without my name to it. When he was absent for a few weeks, and none but the *ladies* of the family at home, I wrote this story, sent it to Johnson, had it printed with a titlepage without my name, and on my father's return home showed it to him. Not one of the

female committee who sat upon it every day whilst it was writing and reading ever imagined that it would be thought a severe libel upon the sex; perhaps because their attention was fixed upon Mrs. Granby, who is at least as much a panegyric as Mrs. Bolingbroke is a satire upon the sex. It is curious that the Edinburgh reviewers laugh at us for introducing into every story some charming wife, sister, mother, or daughter, who acts the part of the good fairy of the piece. "Leonora" will confirm them in this opinion, and will, I hope, make my peace with you.

There is some probability that my father and two or three of this family may be in England this year; and we look forward to the hopes of seeing you, my dear madam, as one of the greatest pleasures that a visit to London can afford. My brother Sneyd, who is going to enter the Temple, will certainly accompany my father to England. You may remember, if you do not always forget your own goodness, that you selected and read to us, several years ago, some lines "On Evening" in "The Monthly Magazine," by C. S. E——, written when he was ten years old. He has not indulged since in writing much poetry, as he had far other studies to pursue for the College of Dublin. On quitting that college, he wished to leave some memorial behind; and he has just finished a poem called "The Transmigrations of Indur," —the plan taken from your tale in "Evenings at Home." If this poem should obtain a premium from the college, we shall think it worthy of the honor of being presented to you, my dear Mrs. Barbauld. . . .

Believe me, dear Mrs. Barbauld, I am, with sincere esteem and grateful affection,

Your friend,

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

Maria, on hearing from a friend in London that "Leonora" was not as much liked as "Popular Tales," wrote, "I must try and do something better." Her failure may be ascribed to precisely the faults her father had pointed out to her. It was not calculated to please the general public; and the book had grave defects of plan and execution, though not without many admirable ideas and many excellent passages. When her brother and sister were reading "Sir Charles Grandison," she said, in writing to a friend, —

"I almost envy them the pleasure of reading Clementina's history for the first time. It is one of those pleasures which can never be repeated in life."

In this same season of 1806, she made several visits in the spring to Sonna, Pakenham Hall, Farnham, and Castle Forbes. In March she wrote to Mrs. Edgeworth of a "happy week" she had at Collon with Mrs. Beaufort, the mother of Mrs. Edgeworth; and from there she went to Rosstrevor to visit her aunt, Mrs. Ruxton.

The following pleasant and kindly letter of Mr. Edgeworth will show how warmly Maria and he welcomed a new-comer in the field of Irish fiction, which one might fancy she considered her peculiar province. She was always ready to enjoy the books of a new writer, and she hailed with enthusiasm the appearance of each new claimant for literary honors. Her very cordial words were supplemented by generous help, and she gave valuable aid to struggling writers more than once.

Mr. Chorley puts on record what has often been remarked of Lady Morgan, — her ingratitude and self-assumption. He says, —

"I have often heard her declare in one breath that she created the national Irish novel; while in another, with sublime inconsistency, she would assert that Miss Edgeworth was a grown woman while she was yet a child."

Miss Edgeworth was always so interested in a new novel of any merit, that she could not bear to stop to reason on its improbability. Lady Morgan's "O'Donnell" was being read aloud some time after this, at the scene of McRory's appearance in the billiard-room, when her father said, "This is quite improbable." — "Never mind the improbability: let us go on with the entertainment."

Sir Walter Scott said of "O'Donnell," that "in it the comic part is very rich and striking;" and he adds, he thinks "a want of story always fatal to a book the first reading. The big bow-wow strain I can do myself like any now going; but the exquisite touch, which renders ordinary, commonplace things and character interesting, from the truth of description, and the sentiment, is denied me." And in speaking of "Granby," a novel of the day, he said, "It is too labored in its descriptions of society. The women do this better. Edgeworth, Ferrier, Austen, have all given portraits of real society far superior to any thing man, vain man, has produced of the like nature."

[R. L. Edgeworth to Sydney Owenson, afterwards Lady Morgan.]

EDGEWORTH HOUSE, Dec. 23, 1806.

MADAM, — I have just read your "Wild Irish Girl," a title which will attract by its novelty, but which does not suit well the charming character of Glorvina.

As a sincere and warm friend to Ireland, I return you my thanks for the just character which you have given to the lower Irish, and for the sound and judicious observations which you have attributed to the priest. The notices of Irish history are ingeniously introduced, and are related in such a manner as to induce belief amongst infidels.

It is with much self-complacency that I recollect our meeting, and my having in a few minutes' conversation at a literary dinner in London discovered that I was talking to a young lady of uncommon genius and talents.

I believe that some of the harpers you mention were at the harpers' prize ball, at Granard, near this place, in 1782 or 1783. One female harper, of the name of Bridget, obtained the second prize. Fallon carried off the first. I think I have heard the double-headed man. My daughter published an essay on the subject of that prize in an obscure newspaper, of which we have no copy. I shall try at the printer's to obtain a copy, that I may publish it in one of the respectable monthly magazines, with a view to speak my sentiments of your work to the English.

I think it is a duty, and I am sure it is a pleasure, to contribute, as far as it is in my power, to the fame of a writer who has done so much, and so well, for her country.

Maria, who reads (it is said) as well as she writes, has entertained us with several passages from "The Wild Irish Girl," which I thought superior to any parts of the

book which I had read. Upon looking over her shoulder, I found she had omitted some superfluous epithets. Dare she have done this if you had been by? I think she would have dared, because your good taste and sound sense would have been instantly her defenders. I am, dear madam,

Your obedient servant,

RICHARD LOVELL EDGEWORTH.

In April, Maria mentions an exciting event,—the engagement, and then the marriage, of "Kitty Pakenham" to Sir Arthur Wellesley, later the Duke of Wellington. He had just returned from his brilliant career in India, after a stay there of eleven years, when he was again ordered to join Lord Cathcart's expedition to Hanover. He was appointed chief secretary for Ireland in 1807. They had long been attached to each other. Maria says of the great man, "the Iron Duke," and his appearance at this date: "He was seen at Dublin Castle on his return to England after his wedding, handsome, very brown, quite bald, and a hooked nose." She adds, "Lady Elizabeth Pakenham told us, that when Lady Wellesley was presented to the queen,[1] her Majesty said, 'I am happy to see you at my court, so bright an example of constancy. If anybody in this world deserves to be happy, you do.' Then her Majesty inquired, 'But did you really never write *one* letter to Sir Arthur Wellesley during his long absence?'—'No, never, madam.'—'And did you never think of him?'—'Yes, madam, very often.' I am glad constancy is

[1] Queen Charlotte.

approved of at courts, and hope the bright example may be followed," she adds.

In July they had a visit from Humphry Davy and Mr. Greenough, two philosophical travellers. Maria thought Davy wonderfully improved since she met him at Bristol, with an amazing fund of knowledge on all subjects, and a great deal of genius. Maria says, —

"My father's domestic happiness about this time had severe shocks. He was doomed to see the fairest blossoms of talent blasted by disease, and the most highly cultivated, and the most valuable, fruits of education perish, almost at the moment when they attained to perfection beyond his fondest hopes.

"Charlotte, for whom he had never had any apprehensions, and who during our visit to Paris had appeared the image of health, and had been described by foreigners 'as fresh as a rose,' suddenly faded. Soon after her return from the Continent, her health declined; but as she did not resemble either of her sisters, Honora or Elizabeth, who died of consumption, this difference long gave flattering hopes of security.

"In the autumn of 1806, however, symptoms of pulmonary consumption appeared. She died the ensuing spring (April, 1807), in her twenty-fourth year."

The following anecdote is related of this young lady: —

"Charlotte was a beautiful girl, with luxuriant golden hair. The rector of the parish and an officer of the British army were dining at Edgeworthstown house. After dinner the ladies repaired to the library, and after

wine the gentlemen followed. As they entered the door of the library, the officer exclaimed, 'How beautiful!' Mr. Edgeworth said, haughtily and quickly, 'What do you admire, sir?' He replied, 'Your daughter's magnificent hair.' Charlotte was standing in a becoming attitude before the bright grate, with her arms resting upon the mantlepiece. Mr. Edgeworth walked across the room to the book-shelves, opened a drawer, held her head back, and cut her hair close to her head. As the golden ringlets fell into the drawer, this extraordinary father said, 'Charlotte, what do you say?' She answered, 'Thank you, father.' Turning to his guests, he remarked, 'I will not allow a daughter of mine to be vain.' "

The death of Charlotte Edgeworth was a sad blow to the family. Henry, also, was a constant invalid and made many fruitless journeys in search of health. While Charlotte continued to be comfortable, Maria made a visit to Coolure, and passed a few days there with the family of Admiral Pakenham. There she met the future leader of the English at New Orleans, Sir Edward Pakenham, who was killed in that engagement with the American forces.

"He had burned his instep by falling asleep before the fire, out of which a turf fell on his foot; and so he was, luckily for us, detained a few days longer. He is very agreeable, and unaffected and modest, after all the flattery he has met with."

Mr. Edgeworth enlarged the library this year by breaking through the thick old outside walls of the house, and leaving two square pillars, beyond which a large addition was built. He also laid out for

Maria a garden at the west end of the house, close to a new greenhouse, built to match the addition to the library, and opening into Mrs. Edgeworth's dressing-room. Maria had before this made a pretty garden of an old unused quarry, but it was at quite a distance from the house. The planning, arranging, and planting this new garden, on which she could look from her own room, was a great pleasure to her.

Anxiety from the insurgents, who called themselves "Thrashers," was very great at this time. They wandered about the country in large bands, attacking houses and seizing arms. The last weeks of Charlotte's life were made very painful by the disturbances and distress this occasioned. One night when Lord Longford and Mr. Rennie, the engineer, were at the house, the family were aroused by such an alarm; and for some time after this the windows were kept barricaded, and a guard of the yeomanry corps stationed in the house. When Mr. Rennie was called up in the night, he remarked, very naturally, that "this was a strange country, where a man could not sleep one night in peace." The marauders did not appear, after all the preparations for defence.

Sir James Mackintosh was so much pleased with the "Popular Tales," that he wrote George Moore in 1807, —

"I hope you have read Miss Edgeworth's 'Popular Tales,' and that you have directed several copies of an Irish translation, made under your auspices, to be distributed to every cottager on your estate. Except the four Gospels, I think there is no book of popular morality equal to it."

EDGEWORTHSTOWN.

It seemed cruel that the dying girl could not be spared the uncertainties of rebellion, and that all the efforts of Maria to ameliorate, by precept and instruction, the condition of their tenantry and the neighboring cottagers, had made no greater impression. The Irish owed much to the Edgeworths, but gratitude has never been a strong national characteristic. Mackintosh, in writing of the condition of affairs there in 1808, says, "Ireland is, I fear, dreadfully *Frenchified*, and almost ready for general insurrection on the appearance of Bonaparte's troops.

The Abbé Edgeworth, or "Firmont" as he was called in France, was always an object of interest to his relations; and Maria, in a letter of 1807, sends "copy of the epitaph written by Louis XVIII. on the Abbé Edgeworth," to one of the family.

"I am sure the intention does credit to his Majesty's heart, and the Latin does honor to his Majesty's head."

In writing to her brother Sneyd, then in London, in 1808, Maria tells him "of a new wonder, now grown old."

"We have had the physiognomical or character-telling fishes that you described to Honora. Capt. Hercules Pakenham brought them from Denmark, where a Frenchman was selling them very cheap. Those we saw were pale green and bright purple. They are very curious. My father was struck with them as much as, or more than, any of the children; for there are some wonders which strike in proportion to the knowledge instead of the ignorance of the beholders. Is it a leaf? Is it galvanic?

What is it? I wish Henry would talk to Davy about it. The fish lay more quietly in my father's hand than could have been expected, only curled up their tails on my aunt Mary's, tolerably quiet on my mother's; but they could not lie still one second on William's, and went up his sleeve, which, I am told, their German interpreters say is the worst sign they can give. My father suggested that the different degrees of dryness or moisture in the hands cause the emotions of these sensitive fish; but, after *drying* our best, no change was perceptible. I thought the pulse was the cause of their motion; but this does not hold, because my pulse is slow, and my father's pulse is very quick. It was ingenious to make them in the shape of fish, because their motions exactly resemble the breathing and panting and floundering and tail-curling of fish; and I am sure I have tired you with them, and you are sick of these fish."

It was afterwards learned that these conjuring fish had been brought from Japan by the Dutch, and were made of very thin horn.

Maria wrote in Jan. 23, 1808, —

"EDGEWORTHSTOWN.

"I cannot, in conscience, let this frank go without a line to you. I will tell you how 'Professional Education' goes on; which, as it is the object of my waking and sleeping thoughts, I know, by sympathy, must be interesting to you. 'Clergymen' has been entirely re-written; and I hope, as papa and mamma both think so, it has been improved. I have about seventeen pages of the said chapter to copy.

"'Country Gentlemen' — done. I think tolerable, nothing brilliant; gone to Lord Selkirk, who begged to

keep it a fortnight, that he might first get a pamphlet of his own out of his head, which, as it is on the state of the country, must be published before the meeting of Parliament. Besides this chapter, Lord Selkirk has that on 'Statesmen, Diplomatists,' etc. This, I think, is '*ce que j'ai fait de moins mal*,' as Mme. de Genlis said.

"'Education of Princes' has been with Mr. Keir, and has his approbation strongly except in one point, which we shall alter: it will take me three days to make that alteration.

"'Lawyers'—totally re-written. It has been with Judge Fox, and has received his unqualified approbation. I wish Richard could read it before it goes to press: and this was one reason why I wished to go to Gaybrook; for I would have taken it with me, and would have got him to sit up half a night to read it. I know he would do that, and more, for his old friend Maria.

"'Military Education'—corrected since its return from Mr. Keir; story of 'Capt. Spike' taken out, in consequence of Mr. Keir's objections to it as too *softening*, and a better story, from the 'Life of Bertrand du Guesclin,' which I read to you on the sofa, put in its stead.

"'Physician'—still to be done. This is the only one we have to do except the preliminary chapter, which is a mass of heterogeneous stuff,—must be entirely new-formed; will be at least seventy pages. I shall have the whole time the rest of the book is printing to do this; because, though the *preliminary* chapter must come first, it may be printed last, by the common ingenious contrivance of paging it separately in Roman figures.

"I never thought this book would come so near to a conclusion. I am well repaid for all the labor this copying and correcting has cost me, by seeing that my father is pleased with it, and thinks it a proof of affection and

gratitude. I cannot help, however, looking forward to its publication and fate with an anxiety and apprehension I never felt before; for I consider that my father's credit is at stake."

"Professional Education" contains eight chapters, namely, "The Choice of a Profession," "Clerical," "Military and Naval," "Medical," "Country Gentleman," "Law," "Statesman," "Prince." "The Choice of a Profession" is very useful, and contains many good hints. All are valuable and well written. The principle on which the essays are founded is quoted at the beginning of the first chapter from Dr. Johnson, who was decidedly of the opinion that chance more often influenced men in the choice of a calling than any thing else. He expressed himself to that effect in his "Life of Pope," saying, —

"Those who attain any excellence commonly spend life in one pursuit, for excellence is not often obtained on easier terms. But to the particular species of excellence, men are directed, not by an ascendant planet or predominating humor, but by the first book which they read, some early conversation which they heard, or some accident which excited ardor and emulation."

He expressed this thought yet more strongly in the "Life of Cowley," ending thus: "The true genius is a mind of large general powers, accidentally determined to some particular direction," — as Cowley was made a poet, he adds, by reading Spenser's "Fairy Queen," which lay in his mother's window-seat.

This book contained only the name of Mr. Edgeworth on its titlepage. Maria made no secret of the assistance of her father, but probably it was thought that it would not be considered as valuable by the public if the hand of a woman was detected in its composition. Mr. Edgeworth's dedication to Earl Spenser is very admirable for its brevity, conciseness, and simplicity.

My Lord, — The good sense of two centuries has confirmed Bacon's opinion of dedications, — "*that books, such as are worthy the name of books, ought to have no patrons but truth and reason.*" Your lordship's name, therefore, is prefixed to these essays, not as a propitiating offering to the public, but as a tribute due to a great statesman, who is an illustrious example of the effects which may be expected from good education. Sir William Jones, thirty years ago, pronounced of his pupil: "This man will serve his country."

R. L. E.

Edgeworthstown, May, 1808.

Both "Practical" and "Professional Education" enlarge much on truth-telling.

"Begin by training the boy [says "Professional Education"] to tell the truth. Use every motive of shame and praise to inspire him with this courage. Teach him to scorn to tell a lie. Explain to him the value of a promise: explain it to him with some solemnity. Tell him that a gentleman, a man of honor, never, for any consideration, breaks his word. Teach him to be fearfully cautious of making promises, and to feel a holy horror of breaking them. Teach him this by example,

as well as by precept, or your words may play upon his ear, but they will never reach his heart. Truth and honesty, then, are the fundamental parts of a great character; and these qualities can be most effectually taught in childhood."

In the education of princes, he says princes are usually proficient in horsemanship; for horses are not flatterers, and there is no royal road to learning to manage horses.

CHAPTER XI.

"Corinne."—Sir Walter Scott.—Maria's Assistance of her Father in writing.—"Ennui."—Maria begins "Vivian."—Social Life.—"Cottagers of Glenburnie."—Maria makes Visits.—A Visit from Primate Stuart.—"Tales of Fashionable Life," published in 1809.—Notices of this Book.—Maria plans for Future Work.—Summer Visitors.—Mr. Johnson's Death.—Mrs. Inchbald.—Mrs. Barbauld's Edition of "British Novelists."—"Belinda" placed in it.—Maria writes Mrs. Inchbald.—Sir James Mackintosh's Opinion of Maria's Works.—Maria's Criticism on Books of the Day.—Mrs. Leadbeater.—Maria edits her Book.—Irish Theatricals.

In the year 1808 Maria notes reading "Corinne" and "Letters from the Mountain."

"I have read 'Corinne' with my father, and I like it better than he does. In one word, I am dazzled by the genius, provoked by the absurdities, and, in admiration of the taste and critical judgment of Italian literature displayed throughout the whole work, I almost broke my foolish heart over the end of the third volume; and my father acknowledged he never read any thing more pathetic. . . . We have just had a charming letter from Mrs. Barbauld, in which she asks if we have read 'Marmion.'"

As Mr. Poole[1] credits Sir Walter Scott with the review of "Patronage," in "The Edinburgh Review" in 1814, it will be well to state, that during the year

[1] Index.

1808 Scott wrote to Constable on the appearance of the twenty-sixth number of "The Review," with the celebrated article of Brougham, entitled "Don Cevallos, on the Usurpation of Spain," "'The Edinburgh Review' has become such as to render it impossible for me to continue a contributor to it,—*now* it is such as I can no longer continue to receive or read it;" and Constable's list of subscribers contains Scott's name with an indignant dash of the pen, and "*Stopt*" against it. Lockhart cannot say whether it was entirely political feeling which caused this, but thinks he was somewhat swayed by the review of "Marmion," which Jeffrey printed in April, 1808. This review was bitter, and unjust to the noble poem of Scott. At all events, he did not write for it after that time. Allibone states Sir James Mackintosh was the author of the article on "Patronage." Scott denied to George Ellis writing one review of Miss Edgeworth's writings:—

"I did *not* review Miss Edgeworth, nor do I think it at all well done: at least, it falls below my opinion of that lady's merits."

There are constant allusions in Scott's life and writings to Miss Edgeworth's writings. In 1808, in writing at Ashiestel his sketch of his own life, he mentions the lord of "Castle Rackrent," who was obliged to cut down a tree to boil a tea-kettle, in comparing this to his own miscellaneous but ill-assorted reading. He remembered, also, an incident similar to that in Miss Edgeworth's story of "Frank:" he himself cut a button from the jacket

of a boy who stood above him in the class. The boy could not recite without holding his button: without it, he was so disconcerted he utterly failed. Scott told this to Rogers the poet, at Lockhart's house in London, on his melancholy journey to Matea.

Maria's devotion to her father and his interests was always paramount. In a letter describing her occupations at this time, she says, —

"The moment 'Professional Education' was gone, the inflammation in poor papa's eyes came on; and besides reading to him, he wanted in a great hurry to write an addition to an essay on 'Wheel Carriages,' which he gave to Mr. Greenough; the subject being before a committee of the House of Commons, and Mr. Cummins and all the great engineers and all the great wagoners disputing *à l'outrance* and *à gorge deployée*, about the comparative merits of cylindrical and conical wheels. So my father, being appealed to, was desirous to state the merits of the said wheels impartially; and he dictated to me, as he walked up and down the library, for two hours, nine pages; and these nine pages had to be copied, and nine and nine, you are sensible, make eighteen: and it was the day I wrote these eighteen pages, that I continued to scrawl that letter to my aunt about Jack Langan."

She laments not hearing from Lovell for a long time: their French friends' letters never answer any questions about him. As Sir Joseph Banks says, "Their letters are now written under evident constraint and fear."

In the summer of 1808 Maria read aloud "Ennui" in manuscript to the family. They used to assemble in the middle of the day in the library, and every-

body enjoyed it. One evening, when they were at dinner with a large party, the butler came up to Mr. Edgeworth, "Mrs. Apreece, sir: she is getting out of her carriage." Mr. Edgeworth went to the hall door, but the family sat still laughing; for there had been so many jokes about Mrs. Apreece, who was then travelling in Ireland, that they thought it was only nonsense of Sneyd's, whom they supposed had dressed up some one to personate her: and they were astonished when Mr. Edgeworth presented her as the real Mrs. Apreece. She staid some days, and was very brilliant and agreeable. She continued, as Mrs. Apreece and Lady Davy, to be a kind friend and correspondent of Maria's.

Maria was delighted with "'Elizabeth,' by Mme. Cottin. The character of the heroine is noble." December, 1808, she was at work on Vivian.

"I have re-written the two first chapters of 'Vivian,' and think it improved. I have put both my head and shoulders to the business; and, if I don't make a good story of it, it shall not be for want of pains."

Dec. 30, 1808, she writes to C. S. Edgeworth the melancholy news of her brother-in-law's (Dr. Beddoes) death. In January, 1809, she was again in the midst of gayeties such as they indulged in, — went to a dinner of thirty-two at Pakenham Hall, and a great ball after it at Mrs. Pollard's; . . . "saw abundance of comedy. There were three Miss ——s, from the county of Tipperary, — three degrees of comparison, the positive, comparative, and the superlative: excellent figures, with white feathers as long as my two

arms joined together stuck in the front of what were meant for Spanish hats. How they towered above their sex divinely vulgar, with brogues of the Milesian race! Supper so crowded that Caroline Pakenham and I agreed to use one arm by turns, and thus with difficulty found means to reach our mouths."

This was the occasion when returning they were upset into a snowdrift by their postilion, who was drunk: no one was hurt. Maria writes of it:—

"Admiral Pakenham lifted me up, and carried me in his arms, as if I had been a little doll, and set me down actually on the step of Mrs. Tuite's carriage, so I never wet foot or shoe."

Miss Elizabeth Hamilton's excellent little book, called "The Cottagers of Glenburnie," appeared in 1808; and Maria hailed its appearance very cordially. She expressed her opinion, that "it will do a vast deal of good; and, besides, it is extremely interesting, which all *good* books are not: it has great powers, both comic and tragic." While Maria was making one of her usual visits at Pakenham Hall, in this year, she read aloud the story of "Emilie de Coulanges:" they all enjoyed it very much, and so expressed themselves to Maria. She wrote that she was hard at work soon after this at "Vivian."

"My father says 'Vivian' will stand next to Mrs. Beaumont ('Manœuvring') and 'Ennui.' I have ten days' more work at it, and then huzza! Ten days more purgatory at other corrections, and then a heaven upon earth of idleness and reading, which is my idleness. Half of 'Professional Education' is printed."

About this time Maria sent a picture of herself, which appeared as the frontispiece of a magazine, to her aunt, Mrs. Ruxton. It represents a "buxom young lady, tall and large, and totally unlike Maria," said one of her family; but the print bore the name of Maria Edgeworth at the foot of the page. She wrote beneath a copy of it, —

> "Oh! says the little woman,
> This is none of I," —

in February, 1809.

During this winter of 1809 Maria made a delightful visit at Black Castle. She always enjoyed exceedingly these visits; but she wrote of this particular one, —

"It is no new thing for me to enjoy Black Castle, but I think I was particularly happy there last time."

After her return home, the play of "The Grinding Organ" was performed by the family in the theatre of Edgeworthstown house. Maria liked the way in which it was set very much. She afterwards published it, in 1827, in a small volume called "Little Plays." In April the Primate of Ireland, Mr. Stuart, made them a visit, pleasing Maria very much. She said of him, —

"He has two things in his character which I think seldom meet, — a strong taste for humor and strong feelings of indignation. In his eye you may often see alternately the secret laughing expression of humor, and the sudden open flash of indignation. He is a man of the

warmest feelings, with the coldest exterior I ever saw, — a master mind."

Maria hailed the arrival of "Tales of Fashionable Life," in June of 1809. They "reached us yesterday in a Foster frank. They looked well enough; not very good paper, but better than 'Popular Tales.'" The first set contained "Ennui," "Mme. de Fleury," "Almeria," "The Dun," and "Manœuvring," in three volumes. The paper was very poor.

In the "Personal Sketch" of Sir Jonah Barrington, he says, in describing his experience of life and the condition of Ireland, —

"Miss Edgeworth's 'Castle Rackrent' and 'Fashionable Tales' are incomparable in depicting truly several traits of the rather modern Irish character. . . . The landlord, the agent, and the attorney of 'Castle Rackrent' (in fact, every person it describes) are neither fictitious nor even uncommon characters; and the changes of landed property in the county where I was born (where perhaps they have prevailed to the full as widely as in any other of the united empire) owed, in nine cases out of ten, their origin, progress, and catastrophe, to incidents in no wise differing from those so accurately painted in Miss Edgeworth's narrative."

Barrington's praise sounds faint beside that of "The Edinburgh Review," who honored Maria with a most brilliant and appreciative, yet discriminating, article on her "Fashionable Tales." The writer "envies Miss Edgeworth," not so much for the many brilliant and ingenious stories she has written, "as for the delightful consciousness of having done more

good than any other writer, male or female, of her generation."

"The Quarterly Review" also gave her a long, critical, and exhaustive notice of the "Fashionable Tales."

Maria read several old books this year, among them the celebrated memoirs of Col. Hutchinson, and that of his wife, Mrs. Lucy Hutchinson. Hawkins's "Life of Dr. Johnson" also interested her. She commented on it, —

"He has thrown a heap of rubbish of his own over poor Johnson, which would smother any less gigantic genius."

She also read with interest Powell's sermons.

"The primate lent them to my father. There is a charge on the connection between merit and preferment, and a discourse on the influence of academical studies and a recluse life, which I particularly admire, and wish it had been quoted in 'Professional Education.'"

About this time Maria was planning for future writing, and says, —

"I am going to write a story called 'To-day,' as a match for 'To-morrow;' in which I mean to show that impatience is as bad as procrastination, and the desire to do too much at present is as bad as putting off every thing to to-morrow."

This was never written. Another plan was to write "a story in which young men of all the professions should act a part; like the 'Contrast' in higher life, or the Freeman family ('Patronage'),

only without any possible allusion to our own family. I have another sub-plan of writing 'Cœlebina in Search of a Husband,' without my father's knowing it, and without reading 'Cœlebs,' that I may neither imitate nor abuse it."

During this summer they had many visitors, — the Beaufort family, the Ruxtons, and others. Dr. (afterwards Sir Henry) Holland, "a grand-nephew of Mr. Wedgwood's, and son of a surgeon at Knutsford, Cheshire, and intended for a physician, came here in the course of a pedestrian tour: he spent two days." She found him "very well informed." He was able to tell her much of her friends, the Barbaulds and the Aikins. He was very often at Mrs. Barbauld's. He also told her much of Mrs. Marcet, author of the "Conversations on Chemistry," a charming woman by his account. This visit was the beginning of a life-long, delightful friendship between Dr. Holland and Miss Edgeworth. Dr. Holland's relations, the Darwins and Wedgwoods, were old friends of the Edgeworths. Dr. Holland himself records his impressions of this visit in his "Recollections of Past Life."

"During this interval, before returning to Edinburgh, I made two excursions to Ireland: the first of which — a pedestrian tour in the Wicklow Mountains — I described in a paper or papers in some periodical of that time, the name of which I now forget; the second (in 1809) was made interesting to me by a visit to Edgeworthstown, then the residence of a large and happy family, of whom few now survive. Mrs. Edgeworth, the mother of many children, and the admirable stepmother of many more, died

but four years ago, in her ninety-third year. The friendship I formed with Maria Edgeworth in this my early youth was continued by frequent meetings in London, and once again at Edgeworthstown, whither I took my two sons with me. It was still further maintained by an unbroken and affectionate correspondence for more than forty years. Her letters to me would, in themselves, have formed a volume. One of the last she ever wrote was after reading the first volumes of Macaulay's 'History.' I showed it Lord Macaulay, who was so much struck with its discrimination and ability that he begged me to let him keep it. A few days afterwards a letter came from her family to tell me of her death."

The following letter from Mr. Edgeworth to Mrs. Inchbald, the novelist and actress, explains itself.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, IRELAND, 10th July, 1809.

DEAR MADAM, — I beg you to accept a copy of my daughter's last work. Johnson has already called for corrections for a second edition: your observations would be a treasure to us. When you have a waste moment, pray tell me which of the tales you prefer.

Your friend Lovell Edgeworth has been removed, and is well at Melun.

I am, madam, your sincere admirer,

RICHARD LOVELL EDGEWORTH.

The "Tales of Fashionable Life" went to a second edition in a short time, as will be seen by this letter of Mr. Edgeworth. Mr. Johnson behaved with great liberality about the book, and on his death-bed commissioned Mr. Miles to write to Mr. Edgeworth "that he should ill deserve your confi-

dence, if he were rigidly to adhere to the contract which he made for the last work; the sale of which has enabled him to double the original purchase-money, and to place the sum to the credit of your account."

Mr. Miles behaved very handsomely also to Maria, and treated her in the same fair manner which his uncle had observed. She always felt an affectionate regard for the memory of Mr. Johnson, whose advice was of material assistance to her. He died in December, 1809.

The family circle at Edgeworthstown was enlarged by the birth of a son to Mrs. Edgeworth, in August, 1809.

About this time M. Dumont wrote from Lord Henry Petty's: —

"Nous avons lu en société à 'Bounds,' 'Tales of Fashionable Life,' Toute société est un petit théâtre. 'Ennui' et 'Manœuvring' ont eu un succès marqué: il a été très vif. Nous avons trouvé un grand nombre de dialogues du meilleur, comique, c'est à dire de ceux où le personnages se developpent sans le vouloir, et sans songer à l'être. Il y a des scènes charmantes dans 'Mme. de Fleury.' Ne craignez pas les difficultés: c'est là où vous brillez."

Mrs. Inchbald was considered no mean critic. As early as 1801 Mrs. Opie wrote a friend that she was "going to-day to carry Mrs. Inchbald my book[1] to read. She has promised me her opinion of it, and I long to receive it. She is a judge of the tale only:

[1] Father and Daughter, and The Maid of Corinth.

poetry is to her an undiscovered country. The ballads she already admires highly."

The Misses Sneyd, accompanied by Honora Edgeworth (the second child of that name in the family), passed the autumn of 1809, and the winter, at their brother's, Mr. Sneyd's, in Staffordshire. The Edgeworths had a visit from the celebrated Irish lady, so long and so well known in London society, Lydia White, in December of 1809. Somebody, in speaking of this lady, asked if Miss White "was a bluestocking." — "Oh, yes, she is! I can't tell you how blue." — "What is bluer than blue?" — "*Morbleu!*" exclaimed Lord Norbury.

Mrs. Barbauld was to edit a "Collection of the British Novelists." The critical and biographical notices prefixed are valuable and spirited. Sir Walter Scott acknowledged his indebtedness to her for some of his material, used in preparing his edition of "Ballantyne's British Novelists." Mrs. Barbauld's "Collection" consisted of fifty volumes, and it appeared in 1810. She asked Maria for a corrected copy of "Belinda," which she placed on the list.

In December, 1809, Maria made visits of a few days at Sonna and Pakenham Hall. After her return home she says, —

"I have been reading, for the fourth time I believe, 'The Simple Story,' which I intended this time to read as a critic, that I might write to Mrs. Inchbald about it; but I was so carried away by it that I was totally incapable of thinking of Mrs. Inchbald or any thing but Miss Milner and Dorriforth, who appeared to me real

persons, whom I saw and heard, and who had such power to interest me that I cried my eyes almost out before I came to the end of the story. I think it the most pathetic and most powerfully interesting tale I ever read. I was obliged to go from it to correct 'Belinda' for Mrs. Barbauld, who is going to insert it in her collection of novels, with a preface; and I really was so provoked with the cold tameness of that stick or stone 'Belinda,' that I could have torn the pages to pieces. And, really, I have not the heart or the patience to *correct* her. As the hackney coachman said, 'Mend *you!* better make a new one.'"

In the same month Maria made a careful arrangement of the library, and an alphabetical catalogue, prepared in her most beautiful handwriting. She says, —

"I have lived upon the ladder, my father deploring the waste of time, and the fatigue I underwent."

She wrote some letters to Mrs. Inchbald, with whom she became personally acquainted some time afterwards.

[To Mrs. Inchbald.]

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, Jan. 14, 1810.

I am going to do a very bold thing. Personally a stranger to Mrs. Inchbald myself, I am going to take the liberty of introducing one of my brothers to her. Your kindness to my brother Lovell will perhaps incline you more in Sneyd's[1] favor than any thing I can urge. . . . I hope you will not suspect me of the common author practice of returning praise for praise, when I tell you that I have just been reading, for the third —

[1] C. Sneyd Edgeworth, author of a Life of the Abbé Edgeworth.

I believe for the fourth — time, "The Simple Story." Its effect upon my feelings was as powerful as at the first reading. I never read *any* novel, — I except *none*, — I never read any novel that affected me so strongly, or that so completely possessed me with the belief in the real existence of all the people it represents. I never once recollected the author whilst I was reading it; never said or thought, "*That's a fine sentiment*," or "*That is well expressed*," or "*That is well invented.*" I believed it all to be real, and was affected as I should be by the real scenes, if they had passed before my eyes: it is truly and deeply pathetic. I determined, this time of reading, to read it as a critic, or rather, as an author, to try and find out the secret of its peculiar pathos; but I quite forgot my intention in the interest Miss Milner and Dorriforth excited. But *now it is all over*, and that I can coolly exercise my judgment, I am of opinion that it is by leaving more than most other writers to the imagination, that you succeed so eminently in affecting it. By the force that is necessary to repress feeling, we judge of the intensity of the feeling; and you always contrive to give us, by intelligible but simple signs, the measure of this force. Writers of inferior genius waste their words *describing* feelings, in making those who pretend to be agitated by passion describe that passion, and talk of the *rending of their* hearts, etc., — a gross blunder! as gross as any Irish blunder; for the heart cannot feel, and describe its own feelings, at the same moment. It is "*being like a bird in two places at once.*"

What a beautiful stroke is that of the child, who exclaims, when Dorriforth lets go his hands, "*I had like to have been down.*"

I am glad I have never met with a Dorriforth, for I must inevitably have fallen desperately in love with him;

and, destitute of Miss Milner's powers of charming, I might have died in despair. Indeed, I question whether my being free from some of her faults would not have made my chance worse; for I have no doubt, that, with all his wisdom and virtue, he loved her the better for keeping him in a continual panic by her coquetry. I am excessively sorry you made her end *naughtily*, though I believe this makes the story more moral. Your power as a pathetic writer is even more conspicuous in the second volume, however, than in the first: for, notwithstanding the prodigious and painful effort you require from the reader to jump over, at the first page, eighteen years, and to behold at once Dorriforth old, and Miss Milner a disgraced and dying mother, with a grown-up daughter beside her; notwithstanding the reluctance we feel at seeing Dorriforth as an implacable tyrant, and Sandford degraded to a trembling dependent, — yet against our will, and absolutely against our resolution to be unmoved, you master our hearts, and kindle a fresh interest, and force again our tears. Nothing can be finer than the scene upon the stairs, where Dorriforth meets his daughter, and cannot unclasp her hand, and when he cannot call her by any name but Miss Milner, — dear Miss Milner.

I wish Rushbrooke had not been a liar: it degrades him too much for a hero. I think you sacrificed him too much to the principle of the pyramid. The mixture of the father's character in the daughter is beautiful. As to Miss Wordly, who can help loving her, and thinking she is their best friend, whoever that may be?

Mrs. Horton is an excellent comic. Her moving all her things about her room to lessen the embarrassment, and her wishing (without being ill-natured) to see a quarrel, that she might have some sensations, is admirable. Did

you really draw the characters from life? or did you invent them? You excel, I think, peculiarly in avoiding what is commonly called *fine writing*, — a sort of writing which I detest; which calls the attention away from the *thing* to the *manner*, from the feeling to the language; which sacrifices every thing to the sound, to the mere rounding of a period; which mistakes *stage effect* for nature. All who are at all used to writing know and detect the *trick of the trade* immediately; and, speaking for myself, I *know* that the writing which has least the appearance of literary *manufacture*, almost always pleases me the best. It has more originality: in narration of fictitious events, it most surely succeeds in giving the idea of reality, and in making the biographer, for the time, pass for nothing. But there are few who can, in this manner, bear the *mortification* of staying behind the scenes. They peep out eager for appearance, and destroy all illusion by crying, *I* said it, *I* wrote it, *I* invented it all! Call me on the stage and crown me directly!

I don't know whether you have ever met with a little book called "Circumstances respecting the Life of the late Charles Montford, Esq., *by George Harley, Esq.*" When you have half an hour's leisure, do me the favor to look at it: for I think it possesses something of the same kind of merit as "The Simple Story;" though it has many faults, and, except now and then, nothing like its pathos. But it resembles it in creating the belief of its being real. I often thought, while I was reading it, this might have been better written; but I am glad the circumstances did not fall into the hands of a professional novel-writer, who might perhaps have *made more of them* for common readers, but who would have spoiled them for me by the *manufacture*. It must be true, I thought, and the biographer a real friend; because he cares so

little about himself and his own writing, so that he does justice to the memory of his friend.

I have lately been told that it is a mere fiction, and that it was written by a gentleman whose name I forget, — a brother of Mrs. Trench's: perhaps you know the name.

My father and Mrs. Edgeworth beg to be kindly remembered to you, and wish you would come here and see us, as we cannot go to England at present. Can you? Will you?

Affectionately yours,

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, Jan. 15.

Mrs. Barbauld was busily engaged on the "British Novelists," to which Maria refers. Maria wrote to Mrs. Barbauld as follows: —

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, Jan. 18, 1810.

MY DEAR MADAM, — I have great pleasure in making a good beginning of this new year by fulfilling a request of yours. My brother Sneyd will have the honor of waiting upon you with "Belinda." I wish I could be of the party; but, alas! this is quite out of my power. My father, thank God! has perfectly recovered his health and strength; but he is now engaged in an undertaking which will attach him for some time to the bogs of Ireland. Sneyd will give you an account of the commissioners for improving our bogs; and pray ask him for a history of the moving bog in our neighborhood, of the wonders of which he has been an eye-witness. I would tell you of these, but that he can tell in five minutes what I could not write in five. So to return to my own business: "Belinda," I have taken some, and my father has taken a great deal of pains, to improve her. In the first volume the alterations are very slight, and merely verbal. In the

second volume *Jackson* is substituted for the husband of Lucy, instead of *Juba;* many people having been scandalized at the idea of a black man marrying a white woman. My father says that gentlemen have horrors upon this subject, and would draw conclusions very unfavorable to a female writer who appeared to recommend such unions: as I do not understand the subject, I trust to his better judgment, and end with, — for Juba, read Jackson.

In the third volume, I have taken out every thing that gave encouragement (beyond esteem) to Mr. Vincent; for great complaints were made against Belinda for want of constancy to Clarence Hervey, and for jilting Vincent. By taking out her consent to marry, I hope I shall, in some degree, satisfy all parties. Belinda is but an uninteresting personage, after all; but I cannot *mend* her in this respect, without making her over again, and, indeed, without making the whole book over again. I was not, either in Belinda or Leonora, sufficiently aware that the *goodness* of a heroine interests only in proportion to the perils and trials to which it is exposed.

I have been made still more sensible of my own deficiencies, by just reading "The Simple Story," which, throughout, has such a powerful, irresistible interest. I hope you think of it as I do, that it is one of the most pathetic tales that ever was written.

I long, my dear madam, to see your *prefaces*,[1] and wish for your sake, as well as for that of the public, that they were finished; for I know how any unfulfilled engagement of that sort presses upon the mind.

What a loss, what an irreparable loss, we have had of our excellent friend Johnson![2] Ask Sneyd to tell you how generously, how kindly, he behaved to us in the last

[1] To Mrs. Barbauld's edition of the British Novelists.

[2] Mr. Johnson, the publisher.

act almost of his life. I think the excellent character of him which appeared in "The Star" could have come from none but such a writer and such a friend as Mrs. Barbauld. I am glad to hear that Johnson's habits of liberality did not injure his fortune, and that his property descends to a representative so worthy of him as Mr. Miles. Ask Sneyd, also, how Mr. Miles behaved towards us. I know you have pleasure in hearing of instances of virtue in whatever class or rank of life.

Sir James Mackintosh, in writing from Bombay to his wife, in 1810, pays a pleasant tribute to Maria. He says of "Tales of Fashionable Life," after commenting on the utility which he considers a characteristic of Hogarth's pictures, —

"Observations somewhat similar may be applied to Miss Edgeworth's fictions. In my first enthusiasm of admiration, I thought that she had first made fiction useful; but every fiction since Homer has taught friendship, patriotism, generosity, contempt of death. These are the highest virtues; and the fictions which taught them were, therefore, of the highest, though not of the mixed, utility. Miss Edgeworth inculcates prudence, and the virtues of that family. Are these excellent virtues higher or more useful than those of fortitude and benevolence? Certainly not. Where, then, is Miss Edgeworth's merit, her extraordinary merit, both as a moralist and a woman of genius? It consists in her having selected a class of virtues far more difficult to treat as the subject of fiction than others, and which had, therefore, been left by former writers to her. This is the merit both of originality and utility; but it never must be stated otherwise, unless we could doubt that superiority of the benevolent virtues

over every other part of morals, which is not a subject of discussion, but an indisputable truth."

"The Edinburgh Review" made an attack on Mr. Edgeworth's "Professional Education" of the most severe style. Mackintosh says of it, —

"The twenty-ninth ["Edinburgh Review"] is distinguished by ——'s[1] attack on Greek and Latin, under the title of a review of Edgeworth's book on 'Professional Education.'"

Mr. Edgeworth's book was made the occasion of the reviewer's strictures on the advantages of the more modern styles of education over the long-approved classical system in vogue at Oxford. The book was widely read, and went soon to a second edition. One may question the premises, or deny the conclusions, of Mr. Edgeworth's argument; but the papers of "Professional Education" contain many valuable hints for parents, and the instructions of boys.

In this year Maria received a novelty as a gift, "a worked muslin cap, which cost sixpence, in tambour stitch, done by a steam-engine."

In 1810 Miss Edgeworth wrote of the appearance of Lord Byron's poem: —

"I do not like 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers;' though, as my father says, the lines are very strong, and worthy of Pope and the 'Dunciad.' But I was so prejudiced against the whole, by the first lines I opened upon, about the 'Paralytic Muse,' of the man[2] who had been his

[1] Sydney Smith. [2] The Earl of Carlisle.

guardian, and is his relation, and to whom he had dedicated his first poems, that I could not relish his wit. He may have great talents, but I am sure he has neither a great nor a good mind; and I feel dislike and disgust for his lordship."

In the spring the Misses Sneyd and Honora returned home.

On the appearance of "The Lady of the Lake," Miss Edgeworth wrote: —

"It is a charming poem, a most interesting story, generous, finely drawn characters, and in most parts the finest poetry; but for an old prepossession — an unconquerable prepossession — in favor of the 'Old Minstrel,' I think I should prefer this to either the 'Lay' or 'Marmion.'"

She had dreaded the appearance of this poem, and wrote, months before it came out: —

"I do not augur well of the title 'The Lady of the Lake.' I hope this lady will not disgrace him."

At this time Maria read the letters of Mme. du Deffand, the old blind Frenchwoman, who was a friend and correspondent of Horace Walpole.

"Some of the letters in her collection are very entertaining, — those of the Duchesse de Choiseul, the Count de Broglie, Sir James Macdonald, and a few of Mme. du Deffand's: the others are full of *fade* compliment, and tiresome trifling, but altogether curious as a picture of that profligate, heartless, brilliant, and *ennuyed* society. There is in these letters, I think, a stronger picture of *ennui* than in Alfieri's life. Was his passion for the Countess of Albany, or for horses, or for pure Tuscan, the strongest? or did not he love NOTORIETY better than all three?"

In 1810 a Quaker lady, Mrs. Mary Leadbeater, who lived at Ballitore, and whose grandfather had been tutor to Edmund Burke, sent the MS. of a book she had written to Maria, for her advice. This lady was the grand-daughter of a learned Quaker, Abraham Shackelton, the founder of the school which Burke attended in 1741 at Kildare, near Dublin. When Edmund Burke lay on his death-bed, he wrote, by dictation, a very touching letter to Mrs. Leadbeater, recalling old school-days, and signed it with his own hand. She had published a volume of "Poems" in 1808. "The Landlord's Friend" and "Cottage Biographies" appeared in 1822. The MS. was called "Cottage Dialogues;" and, when Mr. Edgeworth heard it read, he was so much pleased with it, that Maria offered, at his suggestion, to add a few notes, and write a preface for the book. This done, they made favorable terms with Mr. Johnson's successors; and the book was well received by the public.

Among other items of interest, Miss Edgeworth refers to the novel of "Patronage," now on the stocks, after being laid aside for a long time.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, Aug. 1, 1810.

MY DEAR MRS. BARBAULD, — Your kind and delightful letter gave us all peculiar pleasure; not only from its kindness, and the highly gratifying expressions of a regard which we *know to be sincere*, but from its proving to us that your mind has resumed all its energy, and that you have recovered from that cruel[1] and unavoidable depression of spirits. You can hardly know, unless you

[1] Death of Mr. Barbauld.

were with us, my dear Mrs. Barbauld, how much we rejoiced at this, nor how earnestly we desire to add, if we could, to your happiness. Why cannot you cross this vile sea, and be with us in a week? Look at the frank of this letter. With pride I bid you look and see that it is franked by your pupil Lord Selkirk, a pupil who does you the greatest honor, a pupil who sets you the best example too; for this is his second visit to Edgeworthstown. And you! —

Lord Selkirk begs me to remember him to you in the most respectful and kind manner, and I am sure you will be glad to hear that he seems in perfect health and happiness. His arrival, and that of a succession of visitors, prevented my finishing the *errata* for "Griselda" as soon as I wished, and must now be my apology for sending them to you in their blotted and blurred state; for I really have not time this day to copy them, and I fear to delay your printer.

Your observations on "Professional Education" are as solid as they are elegantly expressed. My father thanks you for them with his whole head and heart. He is correcting the book for a second edition, and he will avail himself of your remarks about the impossibility in some classes of life of the parents early deciding the child's profession.

I thank you, my kind and able defender, for the essay in "The Gentleman's Magazine." May it ever be my fate to be so attacked and so defended! We did not know the essay was written by you: but the moment we read it we were struck, not only with its strength and ability, but with its judicious zeal; and we settled that it must be written by some *friend* who was warmly and personally interested for us.

Can you suppose that any one in this house could see

an advertisement of a book of Miss Aikin's without immediately sending for it? But, alas! you little know how long it is before our impatience to see new publications can be gratified. In the centre of Ireland, we wait sometimes months before we can get possession of the books we long for. We have not yet "The Lady of the Lake" *of our own;* though we have begged and borrowed her, and though we wrote for her the moment we heard that she was about to appear in the world. For "Epistles on Women" we wrote at the same time, and again and again and again! And now we have forbid Sneyd, who is coming over, to appear before us, unless he brings it with him, or unless he sends it (as I have desired him till I am hoarse) under cover to Edward Connor, Esq., Dublin Castle. What has prevented his doing this, I cannot imagine, and really wish I could beat him for it.

We have not yet given up all hopes of seeing you in England. My father talks of going to London in spring, but I dare not feed my fancy on these "pictured tales of bright heroic deeds." I know this, however, for certain, that if we do reach London ever again, nothing *can* prevent our having the pleasure of seeing you and hearing you. My father has quite recovered his health, and is as busy in the vast Hibernian bogs as possible. I don't know whether he will improve *them*, but I am sure they have improved *him;* for the air and exercise have quite renovated him. Mrs. Edgeworth sends her real love to you, which, I assure you, she never sends as words, of course, to anybody. She is again in blooming health, and her darling little Francis repays her for all she has suffered for him. He has all his father's liveliness of look, and quickness of motion; and he is, without exception, the best-humored little mortal of his years (of his months, I mean) that I ever saw. He is now *crowing* and

dancing at the window, looking out at his sisters who are making hay. I am much inclined to believe that he has a natural genius for happiness, — in other words, as Sydney Smith would say, great hereditary "constitutional joy."

I am very well, and have been very idle lately, but intend to be industrious. I have, however, begun a story on "Patronage," and wish I could talk with you about it for half an hour, or even five minutes. It is so vast a subject that it flounders about in my hands, and overpowers me. I have also written a preface and notes (for I, too, will be an editor) for a little book which a very worthy countrywoman of mine is going to publish, — Mrs. Leadbeater, granddaughter to Burke's first preceptor. She is poor. She has behaved most handsomely about some letters of Burke's to her grandfather and herself. It would have been advantageous to her to publish them; but, as Mrs. Burke (Heaven knows why) objected, she desisted. The Bishop of Meath afterwards persuaded Mrs. Burke that the letters would be highly honorable to Burke's memory, and Mrs. Burke retracted, and gave her permission; but Mrs. Leadbeater, who is a very scrupulous Quaker, conceived that, having once *promised* not to publish them during Mrs. Burke's life, she should not break this promise. This is, perhaps, a foolish delicacy, but it is a fault on the right side. The book she is now going to publish, "Cottage Dialogues," will be, I hope, for Ireland what the "Cottagers of Glenburnie" are for Scotland, — *minus* the humor of the cottagers. I do not pretend to say that the dialogues are equal in humor or ability to Mrs. Hamilton's book, but I think they will do as much good in this country as hers did in Scotland. And they give such an excellent picture of the modes of living of the lower Irish, that I am in hopes they will interest in England. Of this she, poor, modest, simple

creature, had not the least hope or idea, till we suggested it. We took her MSS. out of the hands of an Irish publisher; and our excellent friend's worthy successor in St. Paul's Churchyard has, on our recommendation, agreed to publish it for her. She accepts from me a preface and notes for the mere English reader.

Adieu, my dear Mrs. Barbauld, abruptly, but most sincerely and affectionately,

Your obliged,

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

Maria mentioned this kind act of hers in the most modest way to Mrs. Barbauld, with "I, too, will be an editor." She was "hard at work on Mrs. Leadbeater. I am afraid my notes are rubbish."

Mrs. Leadbeater trusted entirely to the successors of Mr. Johnson, and was most kindly treated by them. Maria and her father were much gratified by their conduct. The following letter of Mr. Edgeworth, thanking them, shows how much Maria appreciated this.

MY DEAR GENTLEMEN, — I have just heard your letter to Mrs. Leadbeater read by one who dropped tears of pleasure, from a sense of your generous and handsome conduct. I take great pleasure in speaking of you to the rest of the world as you deserve, and I cannot refrain from expressing to yourselves the genuine esteem that I feel for you. I know that this direct praise is scarcely allowable; but my advanced age, and my close connection with you, must be my excuse.

Yours sincerely,

R. L. E.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, May 31, 1811.
(My 68th birthday.)

This autumn the famous theatricals took place at Kilkenny. Maria, with her father and mother, attended them. She enjoyed as much the celebrated people who attended them, as the plays. At the castle of Kilkenny, the head of the Butlers held splendid entertainments in old Irish style. Private theatricals were greatly in vogue in Ireland during the early part of the century. The princely mansion of Carton, the seat of the Duke of Leinster, was one of the places where the beauty and brilliancy of the nobility appeared on the board. Lord Charlemont, Lady Louisa Conolly (aunt of the Napiers), the Countess of Brandon, Lady Rachel Macdonald, Countess Kildare, Viscount Powerscourt, Henry Grattan, and others took part. "The Beggar's Opera" was there performed with fine effect. At the Latouches, at Lord O'Neill's, at the Marquis of Ely's (where the name of Lord Edward Fitzgerald is on the bills), at Lord Grandison's, at Dromana in Waterford, where the name of Prince William Henry (after William IV.) is found, there were gay and lively theatrical performances.

Of all the Irish plays, those of Kilkenny Castle were the most noted.

"In the company were Tom Moore; Wilson Croker, who wrote some charming ballads for them; Chief-Justice Bushe; the Bishop of Meath; Sir Philip Crampton, the celebrated surgeon; Sir Wrixon Beecher and Miss O'Neill, who afterward became his wife. Kilkenny, during the theatrical season, saw a vast assemblage of rank and talent. The streets of that now deserted city were thronged with chariots and horses, and parties of ladies

riding on horseback. Assembling from all parts of Ireland, there was great eagerness among the gentry to become acquainted with one another; and curiosity was always restrained to learn the names and histories of all the remarkable and interesting characters. . . . Crampton was considered the best *Sir Lucius O' Trigger* seen on the stage; but Mr. Corry, who was grand-uncle of Lord Rowton, Lord Beaconsfield's secretary and friend, was the star of the company, the most familiar with stage manners, and most natural in his by-play. Then, how many associations rise to the mind at the name of Moore! At the time he took an active part in the Kilkenny theatricals, he was at the very height of his social powers, though not of his literary fame; and probably only those who knew Moore as he appeared in the Kilkenny company are qualified to judge of the full extent of them. The vivacity and archness of his manner, the ease and grace of his humor, and the natural sweetness of his voice, charmed every one. He contributed two prologues to the plays of Kilkenny. The last time Miss O'Neill played with the company was in 1819, when she played *Desdemona;* her future husband, Sir Wrixon Beecher, playing *Iago*. Never was there seen such impersonation before or since."

In Moore's diaries he describes Mrs. Lefanu, Sheridan's sister, and then tells how he took part in some plays where she performed. He was to speak the epilogue to "A Squeeze to St. Paul's;" and, when the time came for "Master Moore's" performance, he was found nearly asleep behind the scenes, being but eleven years old at this time.

CHAPTER XII.

A Visit to Dublin.—Church-Spire Building.—"Patronage."—"The Absentee."—Raising of the Spire constructed by Mr Edgeworth.—Maria makes Visits in Ireland.—1813, the Edgeworths make a Visit to London.—Enthusiastic Reception of Maria.—She makes many New Friends.—Misses Mme. de Staël.—The Party travel through England before they return to Ireland.—Sir James Mackintosh.

In November of 1810 Maria, with her father, Mrs. Edgeworth, and some of the family, went to Dublin to attend the lectures of Humphry Davy. These lectures were very interesting to Maria, and confirmed her high idea of his talents, which she formed many years before this time, when she first met him at Bristol. On this occasion they made the acquaintance of several eminent people. Solicitor-General Bushe, and his brother-in-law, Sir Philip Crampton, they had met before, but became quite intimate with them after this visit to Dublin. They also made the acquaintance, which ripened later into an intimacy, of Mr. Romney Robinson, then a very young man, just beginning his career of astronomer at the observatory, with Dr. Brinkley.

In 1811 Mr. Edgeworth was busily engaged on the plan and construction of a spire for the church in Edgeworthstown.

Maria had an odd letter, in 1811, from some young

ladies, who signed themselves "Clarissa Craven, Rachel Biddle, and Eliza Finch," — "who, after sundry compliments in very pretty language, and with all the appearance of seriousness, beg that I will do them the favor to satisfy the curiosity that they feel about the wedding-dresses of the Frankland family in 'The Contrast.' I have answered them in a way that will stand for jest or earnest. I have said, that, at a sale of Admiral Tipsey's smuggled goods, Mrs. Hungerford bought French cambric-muslin wedding-gowns for the brides, the collars trimmed in the most becoming manner, as a Monmouthshire milliner assured me, with Valenciennes lace from Admiral Tipsey's spoils. I have given all the particulars of the bridegrooms' accoutrements, and signed myself the young ladies' 'obedient servant, and, perhaps, *dupe*.'"

Maria was constantly at work on "Patronage" during this time; and, in spite of all sorts of interruptions from the presence of many visitors who were attracted to their pleasant home, she persevered steadily, working several hours each day. During the summer months, Mr. Edgeworth was busily engaged on the supervision of the spire; and Maria was greatly interested in the success of this curious undertaking. In August she wrote a little play, called "The Absentee," for the children of her sister, Mrs. Beddoes, who were with them at Edgeworthstown. After this had been performed by these children, and Maria's half brothers and sisters, she decided to offer it to Sheridan. He said the lord-chamberlain would refuse to sanction its performance, in the divided condition of Ireland at that

time. When she thought of sending the play to Sheridan, the family copied it for her, each taking a certain part; and, by working very late, the perfect copy was finished in one evening. This little play was afterwards made the groundwork of the story known as "The Absentee." The idea of an Irish absentee family living in London had originally formed part of "Patronage." The absentees were patients of Dr. Percy.

"Patronage" was at first intended to form part of a second series of "Fashionable Tales," with "Vivian," and "Emilie de Coulanges;" but finding that she could not possibly complete this story in two volumes, and as Mr. Miles was anxious to publish the second set of "Tales" early in the ensuing year, Maria again laid aside "Patronage;" and, using the sub-plot of the Irish absentee family, she made "The Absentee." "The Absentee" formed a volume and a half of the second set of "Tales." Maria liked the story very much, after she really prepared the plan of it. She changed the name of Tipperary to Clonbrony, for certain reasons of her own. The famous letter of Larry, the postilion, which ends "The Absentee," is unrivalled as a specimen of Irish wit. Lord Jeffrey said of the epistle of Larry Brady, the good-natured post-boy, to his brother, giving an account of the return of the family to Clonbrony, —

"If Miss Edgeworth had never written any other thing, this one letter must have placed her at the very top of our scale as an observer of character, and a mistress of the simple pathetic."

We have somewhat anticipated events in speaking of the end of "The Absentee," and must return to the summer of 1811. Mr. Davy made another visit to Edgeworthstown on his way to Connemara this season, "for he was a little mad about fishing." Maria found him "full of entertainment and information, as usual."

Maria watched with interest the approaching perfection of the spire. She describes the trial of it in July, when, a signal being given, "the four men at the corner capstans work the windlass; and, in a few moments, with a slow, majestic motion, the spire begins to ascend. Its gilt ball and arrow glitters higher and higher in the sun, and its iron skeleton rises by beautiful degrees, till, in twelve minutes and a half, its whole transparent form is high in air, and stands composed and sublime in its destined situation." On the 19th of September the final ascent of this spire was made, in the presence of a large assemblage of friends and relatives. The company included, according to their old servant Jack Langan's "triumphant calculations, five lords and baronets." This piece of work was considered worthy of a description in "Nicholson's Journal," a scientific work of the day. The spire was standing in safety within a decade, unshaken by the storms of many years.

Maria wrote the following interesting account of the preparation of the ascent, and the day, which follows: —

"In the year 1811 my father was occupied in constructing, upon a plan of his own invention, a spire for

the church of Edgeworthstown. This spire was formed of a skeleton of iron, covered with slates, painted and sanded to resemble Portland stone. It was put together on the ground, within the tower of the church; and, when finished, it was to be drawn up at once, with the assistance of counterbalancing weights, to the top of the tower, and there to be fixed in its place.

"The novelty of the construction of this spire, even in this its first skeleton state, excited attention; and as it drew towards its completion, and near the moment when, with its covering of slates, altogether amounting to many tons' weight, it was to move, or not to move, fifty feet from the ground to the top of the tower, everybody in the neighborhood, forming different opinions of the probability of its success or failure, became interested in the event.

"Several friends and acquaintance, in our own and from adjoining counties, came to see it drawn up. Fortunately it happened to be a very fine autumnal day; and the groups of spectators of different ranks and ages, assembled and waiting in silent expectation, gave a picturesque effect to the whole. A bugle sounded, as the signal for ascent. The top of the spire, appearing through the tower of the church, began to move upward: its gilt ball and arrow glittered in the sun, while, with motion that was scarcely perceptible, it rose majestically. Not a word nor interjection was uttered by any, even of the men who worked the windlass at the top of the tower.

"It reached its destined station in eighteen minutes; and then a flag streamed from its summit, and gave notice that all was safe. Not the slightest accident or difficulty occurred. The conduct of the whole had been trusted to my brother William (the civil engineer); and the first

words my father said, when he was congratulated upon the success of the work, were, that his son's steadiness gave him infinitely more satisfaction than he could feel from the success of any invention of his own.

"The spire was well secured, and provided with a conductor before he left the place. This proved a wise precaution; for that very evening, the weather changing suddenly, a storm of wind, thunder, and lightning lasted during the night. In the morning the first thing of which we thought, the first point to which we looked, was the spire; but my father had not been anxious, and experience has hitherto justified his confidence. In thirty-two years since its erection, no change has been perceptible in the perpendicularity of this spire; though the slightest alteration would have been detected, as, by a singular coincidence, the spindle of the weathercock was precisely in the plane of a vertical wire of the transit instrument in the observatory in our house."

Spires of similar construction were erected at Cork and Enniskillen after this.

The following little extract from Hall's "Travels in Ireland" will be of interest to the reader as giving a glimpse of home life: —

"From none to whom I had been introduced, did I meet a more hospitable reception than from Mr. Edgeworth of Edgeworthstown, of whom, and his daughter Maria, to whom I had also a letter of introduction, I had heard and read so much. As the covetous man rejoices in the prospect of adding to his stores, and the pious man at the prospect of those meetings where the fire of devotion will be made to burn more purely, in hopes of the feast of reason and the flow of souls, I approached Edgeworthstown, so much of late the abode of the Muses.

"Mr. Edgeworth and his daughter, being about to take an airing in the carriage when I called, which was soon after breakfast, and a very fine day, asked me to accompany them; to which I readily assented, and was much pleased with their remarks on the objects which occurred in the course of our ride.

"When we returned from our ride, I found the rector of the parish, the Roman-Catholic priest, and the Presbyterian clergyman had been invited to dine; and, that there might be no preference shown to one clergyman before another at dinner, Mr. Edgeworth said grace himself. In this hospitable mansion, the favorite abode of the Muses, the rendezvous of the wise and good, Papists and Protestants agree. Miss Edgeworth joined in the conversation; and, as may well be supposed, the author of 'Castle Rackrent,' 'Irish Bulls,' 'The Absentee,' etc., served much to enliven and inform it. I had heard much of Miss Edgeworth, and knew that she and her father had taken an extensive view of the vast edifice of human knowledge, but found that not one-half of her numerous amiable accomplishments had been told me. Of her it may be said: 'Omne quod tetigit ornavit.'

"When I mentioned, that having orreries, armillary spheres, globes, and the apparatus necessary for giving some idea of the various branches of experimental philosophy, various persons are employed in giving lessons on these subjects at ladies' boarding-schools, Miss Edgeworth seemed not displeased, as she and her father, in their 'Letters on Education,' had recommended something of the kind.

"As Mr. Edgeworth's children are all instructed at home, the system of education recommended to others is practised in his own family. I observed three of his daughters, fine little girls, busily employed in sewing a covering of

patches of various colors for a poor family in the vicinity, who had once been servants in the house. As soon as the work should be finished, the girls were themselves to make the present; and to this period I found them looking forward with more than ordinary pleasure.

"The children are never long confined at one time, their hours being spent alternately in diligence and play. Indeed, children should seldom be idle, but constantly employed in exercising either the mind or body.

"Whatever be the result of the system of education which Mr. Edgeworth and his daughter have recommended, I must say I never saw such marks of filial regard, parental affection, and domestic happiness as at this house. To reside at it, is to see almost realized such scenes of happiness as nowhere exist, but are sometimes presented in the descriptions of enchanted castles. Miss Edgeworth is none of those, as some would make us believe, who write merely for bread; she having an independent fortune, besides what she must now make by the rapid sale of her works. By such books as those of Miss Edgeworth, booksellers fatten, and men are made wiser and better. It is needless to mention that Mrs. Edgeworth is also a successful author, having published the novel, or what you choose to call it, 'The Good Wife.'"

The marriage of Mr. Davy to the celebrated Mrs. Apreece, in 1812, brought forth many *bon mots* in society. One of these was quoted by Maria: —

"To the famèd widow vainly bow
Church, army, bar, and navy.
Says she, 'I dare not take a vow,
But I will take my Davy.'"

Another good one she mentioned: —

"For many men have often seen
Their talents underrated;
But Davy owns that his have been
Duly Appreeciated."

"The Absentee" was finished in July of 1812, and Maria at once resumed "Patronage."

In the autumn of this year Mr. Edgeworth made an addition of a bow-window to the little bedroom always used by Maria; and she enjoyed this very much, as it gave her a better view of her garden.

Maria made some visits during this year to her friends at Black Castle and Pakenham Hall. Lord Longford had a good story from Col. Hercules Pakenham, which is worth repeating as he told it to Maria: —

"At the siege of Badajos, as he was walking with an engineer, a bomb whizzed over their heads, and fell among the soldiers; and as they were carrying off the wounded, when the colonel expressed some regret, the engineer said, 'I wonder you have not steeled your mind to these things. These men are carried to the hospital, and others come in their place. Let us go to the depot.'

"Here the engineer had his wheelbarrows all laid out in nice order, and his pickaxes arranged in stars and various shapes; but, just as they were leaving the depot, a bomb burst in the midst of them. 'Oh, heavenly powers, my picks!' cried the engineer in despair."

[To Mrs. Inchbald.]

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, Sept. 16, 1812.

The best thanks to you, my dear Mrs. Inchbald, for your letter would be to have seen how much pleasure that letter gave to this whole family, — father, mother,

brother, sister, author! The strength and originality of your thoughts and expressions distinguish your letters from all we receive; and when we compared it with one from Walter Scott, received nearly at the same time, and read both letters again to determine which we liked best, upon the whole the preference was given, I think, by the whole breakfast-table (a full jury) to Mrs. Inchbald's. Now, I must assure you, that, as to quantity of praise, I believe Scott far exceeded you; and as to quality, in elegance none can exceed him; but still, in Mrs. Inchbald's letter there was an indefinable originality, and a carelessness about her own authorship, and such warm sympathy, both for the fictitious characters of which she had been reading, and for that Maria Edgeworth to whom she was writing, as carried away all suffrages. We particularly like the frankness with which you find fault and say such and such a stale trick was unworthy of us. None but a writer who has herself excelled could, as you did, feel and allow for the difficulties in composition; nor could any other so well judge where I was wrong or right in dilating or suppressing. I am glad you trembled lest I should have produced old Reynolds again. Most of those who have mentioned him to me have regretted that they did not see more of him, and have longed to have heard of his meeting with his daughter.

It is of great use as well as delight to us to see any thing we write tried upon such a person as you, who will and can do what so few have either the power or courage to attempt, — tell the impression really made upon their feelings, and point out the causes of those impressions.

I do not know what you mean by saying that every sensible mother is like Lady Mary Vivian: you are requested to explain. I wish I could find any excuse for begging another letter from you.

Perhaps we shall, as we at present intend, be in London next spring.

Last night my father and I were numbering the people we should wish to see. Our list is not very numerous, but Mrs. Inchbald is one of the first persons we at the same moment eagerly named. Believe me to be, my dear madam,

Your obliged and grateful

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

Maria had an excursion in October of this year to Dublin, with some of the family, where they witnessed with interest a balloon ascension.

[To Mrs. Inchbald.]

MY DEAR MRS. INCHBALD, — Your letters, like your books, are so original, so interesting, and give me so much the idea of truth and reality, that I am the more desirous to be personally acquainted with you; and in this wish I am most heartily joined by Mrs. Edgeworth, a person whom, though you have not seen in print, you would, I'll answer for it, like better than any one author or authoress of your acquaintance, as I do, my father only excepted: for further particulars, inquire of S. E. We rejoice most exceedingly that you like him, and are sure that the deeper you go into his character, the better it will suit you. I wish you would try what Edgeworthstown could do to excite agreeable emotions in your mind. Upon your own principle, the sea would be as good for you as a free or a high wind. Danger there is none, — except in the imagination, — not even to create a sensation. Sea-sickness is over in a few hours; and my father, who is more sea-sick than most people, bid me tell you just now, as he got on horseback, that you are a

goose if you don't come to us. How dare I write such a word? But I wish you to know my father and all of us just as we are. If you will oblige us, consult Sneyd, and he will show you how very easily the journey and voyage could be arranged.

There are some authors whose books make so much the best part of them, that one can think of nothing else in writing to them; but in writing to Mrs. Inchbald, I can at this moment think of nothing but the wish to see *her*, and to enjoy her society.

Yours sincerely,

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

I remember once, when I had gone on a WILD-goose chase to a *friend's* house, who turned out to be a fine lady instead of a friend, I was just in the solitary, melancholy state you describe; and I used to feel relieved and glad when the tea-urn came into the silent room, to give me a sensation by the sound of its boiling.

"Patronage" was all ready for publication early in 1813; but, as Mr. Edgeworth had planned a visit to England in the spring, it was decided to delay its appearance till after they had returned to Ireland.

Maria was charmed with "Rokeby," and, after reading it with interest, made the following comment on it: —

"'Rokeby' is, in my opinion, — and let every soul speak for themselves, — most beautiful poetry. I like it better, think it more universal style of poetry than he has yet produced, though not altogether perfect of its kind."

This criticism does more credit to Maria's independence of judgment than to her poetical taste.

The last of March, 1813, Mr. and Mrs. Edgeworth and Maria left their home for England. They did not hurry to London, but made several little visits on their way thither. They saw Mr. Roscoe at his home near Liverpool, Allerton Hall.

"He is a benevolent, cheerful, gentlemanlike old man [wrote Maria of the historian of the De Medicis], tall, neither thin nor fat, thick gray hair. He made what seemed to me a new and just observation, that writers of secondary powers, when they are to represent either objects of nature, or feelings of the human mind, always begin by a simile. They tell you what it is like, not what it is."

They visited the Hollands at Kentsford, and saw Dr. Ferrier and his daughter at Manchester. Maria tells a good story of Dr. Holland when he was a little boy.

He wrote a letter, when he was six years old, to the king.

"His father found him going with it to the post. This letter was an offer from Master Holland to raise a regiment. He and some of his little comrades had got a drum and flag, and used to go through the manual exercises. It was a pity the letter did not reach the king: he would have been delighted with it.

They made a delightful visit at the Strutts of Derby, the great cotton manufacturers, who entertained much. Tom Moore just missed them: he writes, they "were our predecessors at this house." They also went to Byrkeley Lodge, the home of Mr.

Sneyd, near Derby, and visited the Priory, and Mrs. Darwin and her daughters. Then they went to Cambridge, and saw the college-buildings and some of the professors, enjoying the fine architecture and the scholarly repose of the place. On the way Maria, as was her custom in the course of a long journey, read; and Miss Austen's "Pride and Prejudice" was her book. She had the capacity of receiving great pleasure from the writings of others; rather an unusual one for one who wrote so much. She names reading as her greatest pleasure always, and has a kindly word for each new aspirant for literary honors.

They reached London early in the "season," and found themselves most cordially welcomed by the fashion and culture of the London world. London society was then more centred and concentrated. The great metropolis had not swallowed its suburbs; and as yet there was a unity, a centralization, of the social forces of the best literary and aristocratic elements. Now London is too vast, too full of sets, to afford to any one observer the possibility of enjoying more than a passing view of the panorama of its social life. When the Edgeworths visited it in 1813, the attractions of London were not so diffused, so broken up; and they found themselves for a few weeks the very centre of attention and interest.

This love of London people, like that of the Athenians, for a new thing has long been noticed by literary people. Sir Walter Scott said of this peculiar passion for novelty in 1806, —

"What a *good* name was in Jerusalem, a *known* name seems to be in London. If you are celebrated for writing verses or for slicing cucumbers, for being two feet taller or two feet less than other bipeds, for acting plays when you should be whipped at school,[1] or for attending schools and institutions when you should be preparing for your grave, — your name not only becomes a talisman — an 'Open Sesame' — before which every thing gives way, till you are voted a bore, and discarded for a new plaything."

Years after this Scott remarked, "Who cares for the whipped cream of London society?" after a dinner at Lady Davy's to meet "Lord and Lady Lansdowne and several other fine folks."

The position of Miss Edgeworth could not be that of a discarded plaything: she was to take and keep a permanent place in the hearts of many friends made on this visit. She made many visits in London, and the same good friends were ever ready to welcome her.

Macaulay had a word for the "lion-hunters" when he says, —

"There is nothing more pitiable than the ex-lion or ex-lioness. London, I have often thought, is like the sorceress in the 'Arabian Nights,' who, by some mysterious law, can love the same object only forty days. During forty days she is all fondness: as soon as they are all over, she not only discards the poor favorite, but turns him into some wretched shape, — a mangy dog or spavined horse. How many hundreds of victims have undergone this fate since I was born!"

[1] Master Betty.

There is a great deal of truth in this observation of Macaulay; forty days being about the extent of time which would be allowed the lion of one London season.

Maria had the solid attractions which gave her superiority over the transient stars of this firmament; and then, too, she was modest and unexacting. London society has, however, made and kept many favorites. The name of Samuel Rogers is an example of this. One observer said of his reputation, —

"This comes of being in the best society in London. What Lady Jane Granville[1] called the 'patronage of fashion' can do as much for a middling poet as for a plain girl like Arabella Falconer."

Miss Edgeworth has been accused, by some critics, of an undue partiality to the pleasures of fashionable life: why, it is hard to imagine. She naturally saw much of the gay world during her various visits to the cities of Paris and London; but then, too, her interest was as much excited by scientific and literary people, and she availed herself of every opportunity for study and examination of new scientific discoveries.

Maria found herself famous, but bore all the attentions she received with great modesty. Her greatest pleasure appears to have been — amid all the gayety and the brilliancy of London — the sight of her father honored and respected by England's greatest minds. One judges, from all accounts, that the worthy gentleman shone with the reflected brilliancy

[1] Miss Edgeworth's Patronage.

borrowed from the fame of his daughter's genius. Talents he had of no mean order; but the truth is more than ever impressed upon the mind, that Mr. Edgeworth was somewhat of a *bore*.

After they left London she wrote, —

"The brilliant panorama of London is over; and I have enjoyed more pleasure, and have had more amusement, infinitely more, than I expected, and received more attention, more kindness, than I could have thought it possible would be shown to me. I have enjoyed the delight of seeing my father esteemed and honored by the best judges in England. I have felt the pleasure of seeing my true friend and mother — for she has been a mother to me — appreciated in the best society; and now, with the fulness of content, I return home, loving my own friends and my own mode of life preferably to all others, after comparison with all that is fine and gay, and rich and rare."

Among the many new and pleasant acquaintance made by Maria in the delightful visit may be mentioned some very distinguished people. She met, for the first time, her correspondent, Mrs. Inchbald, and enjoyed the pleasure of an evening at the great Mrs. Siddons's. She met the Miss Berrys of Horace Walpole, Lady Crewe, "who still has the remains of much beauty." Miss Catherine Fanshawe she "particularly" liked, — "she has delightful talents." Of Lord Byron she said, "I can tell you only this, that his appearance is nothing that you would remark." Lady Byron she mentioned as "the charming, well-informed daughter of Lady Milbanke." She always

was interested in her, and Mr. Harness considered her a good friend of Lady Byron.

The kindness of Sir Humphry and Lady Davy was very agreeable to Miss Edgeworth. One great woman she desired much to meet, but it was not to be. "I fear Mme. de Staël's arrival may be put off till after we leave town. The Edinburgh review of her book has well prepared all the world for her," she wrote. These very distinguished women were never to meet. *Apropos* of this, there is a good story Moore tells: —

"In talking of getting into awkward scrapes at dinner-tables, Lady Dunmore mentioned a circumstance of the kind, in which Rogers was concerned. It was at the time when Mme. de Staël was expected in London, and somebody at table (there being a large party) asked when she was likely to arrive. 'Not till Miss Edgeworth is gone,' replied Rogers: 'Mme. de Staël would not like two stars shining at the same time.' The words were hardly out of his mouth, when he saw a gentleman rise at the other end of the table, and say in a solemn tone, '*Mme. la Baronne de Staël est incapable d'une telle bassesse.*' It was Auguste de Staël, her son, whom Rogers had never before seen."

Lady Elizabeth Whitbread became a devoted friend of Miss Edgeworth; and she often visited her in her own home, when she was in London, in after-years. The names of Miss Fox, Mrs. Hope (Lady Beresford), Lady Spencer, Lady Charlotte Lindsay, the Countess of Charleville, Mrs. Siddons, may be numbered as those who paid Maria distinguished courtesy, and the acquaintance was long continued.

"While in London the Princess of Wales wished Maria to visit her. She did not like to do so; and Lady Wellington referred the matter to Lady Liverpool, then considered the best authority on such matters. She ruled that she might decline the invitation by the simple form of, 'Sorry she can't — previous engagement.'"

Of one of the new friends made on this occasion, Maria says, —

"Lady Lansdowne, taking in beauty, character, conversation, talents, and manners, I think superior to any woman I have seen; perfectly natural, daring to be herself, gentle, sprightly, amiable, and engaging."

She says they saw "Lydia White, who has been very kind to us, and eager to bring together people who would suit and please us; very agreeable dinner at her house; she conducts these *bel esprit* parties well: her vivacity breaks through the constraints of those who stand upon great reputations, and are afraid of committing themselves."

There was a dinner at Mr. Horner's, where the Edgeworths had quite an adventure with Dr. Parr. He was exceedingly angry with the party for delaying the dinner, and then interrupting it; and finally he ended by giving Maria his blessing. They spent a day at Hampstead with the Carrs, old friends of Mrs. Barbauld. They also saw Mrs. Barbauld herself, in her own quiet home at Stoke Newington.

In Henry Crabbe Robinson's diary, he tells the following anecdote. He went to Mrs. Barbauld's, and "had a pleasant chat with her about Mme. de Staël, the Edgeworths, etc. The latter are staying in Lon-

don, and the daughter gains the good-will of every one; not so the father. They dined at Sotheby's. After dinner Mr. Edgeworth was sitting next Mrs. Siddons, Sam Rogers being on the other side of her. 'Madam,' said he, 'I think I saw you perform "Millamont" thirty-five years ago.' — 'Pardon me, sir.' — 'Oh! then it was forty years ago: I distinctly recollect it.' — 'You will excuse me, sir, I never played "Millamont."' — 'Oh, yes! madam, I recollect.' — 'I think,' she said, turning to Mr. Rogers, 'it is time for me to change my place;' and she rose with her own peculiar dignity."

Maria was happy in seeing an old friend and relation, and says, —

"Charming, amiable Lady Wellington! As she truly said of herself, she is always 'Kitty Pakenham to her friends.' After comparison with crowds of others, *beaux esprits*, fine ladies, and fashionable *scramblers* for notoriety, her dignified simplicity rises in one's opinion; and we feel it with more conviction of its superiority. She showed us her delightful children."

One of the parties which Miss Edgeworth attended was a "rout," in the parlance of the day, given by Mr. and Mrs. Morris. There she met Mrs. Inchbald, who was an intimate friend of the family. Mr. Morris was a talented man, fellow of Peter House, Cambridge, member of Parliament for Newport, and master in chancery. He wrote two comedies, which were successfully acted at Drury Lane Theatre, — "False Colors" and "The Secret." Mrs. Inchbald was very anxious to meet Miss Edgeworth,

which she did on this occasion. A little later "the same friends gave her a dinner with the future and ex lord chancellors, Lord Erskine and Mr. Brougham; and in the evening the unrivalled painter of Irish manners again."

In a letter which Mrs. Inchbald wrote to her particular friend Mrs. Phillips, of her introduction to the two great literary visitors in London during this year, she says, —

"She (Mme. de Staël) talked to me the whole time; so did Miss Edgeworth whenever I met her in company. These authoresses suppose me dead, and seem to pay a tribute to my memory; but with Mme. de Staël it seemed no passing compliment."

Boaden thinks Mrs. Inchbald's complacency received a severe shock by the kind of attention these ladies paid her. He speaks of it thus: "The last sigh of expiring complacency seems to have heaved above the pen," which wrote of her meeting her sister authoresses.

Miss Edgeworth was very much gratified on her part by making the personal acquaintance of one whom she had long admired and respected. Her pleasure is shown by the long letter she wrote after her return to Ireland. She highly appreciated the opportunity of paying her respects to one of Mrs. Inchbald's talents.

An observer says of the morning they spent at Westminster Abbey with Sir James Mackintosh,—

"Only one morning: days might have been spent without exhausting the information he so easily, and with such

enjoyment to himself as well as to his hearers, poured forth with quotations, appropriate anecdotes, and allusions, historical, poetical, and biographical, as we went along."

Mackintosh himself wrote from London to his daughters in the East, May 11, 1813: —

"Mr., Mrs., and Miss Edgeworth are just come over from Ireland, and are the general objects of curiosity and attention. I passed some hours with them yesterday forenoon, under pretence of visiting the new mint; which was a great object to them, as they are all proficients in mechanics. Miss Edgeworth is a most agreeable person, very natural, clever, and well-informed, without the least pretensions of authorship. She had never been in a large society before; and she was followed and courted by all the persons of distinction in London, with an avidity almost without example. The court paid to her gave her an opportunity of showing her excellent understanding and character. She took every advantage of her situation, either for enjoyment or observation; but she remained perfectly unspoiled by the homage of the great. Mr. Edgeworth is like his daughter, with considerable talents and knowledge; Mrs. Edgeworth, very sensible and agreeable. Upon the whole, the party make a great acquisition to London, where they propose to stay a month."

The party attended a grand ball at Mrs. Hope's, where there were nine hundred guests, "all of beauty, rank, and fashion that London can assemble." Mr. Edgeworth attended a meeting of the Lancastrian schools, at Freemason's Tavern. The Duke of Bedford, after speaking of the fourteenth report of the Irish Board of Education, pronounced a eulogium on the excellent letter which is appended

to that report, full of liberality and good sense, on which, indeed, the best part of the report seems founded; adding, "I mean the letter by Mr. Edgeworth, to whom this country, as well as Ireland, is so much indebted."

They missed Mme. d'Arblay, as well as Mme. de Staël, by their departure from London; but Maria tells as "an extraordinary evidence of the ignorance in which Napoleon I. kept the French people, that when Mme. d'Arblay landed at Portsmouth a few months ago, and saw on a plate at Admiral Foley's a head of Lord Nelson, and the word Trafalgar, she asked what Trafalgar meant. She actually, as Lady Spencer told me, who had the anecdote from Dr. Charles Burney, did not know the English had been victorious, or that Lord Nelson was dead!"

The following *bon mot* of the wits of the day was related by Lord Carrington to her: —

> "Pretty, pretty, pretty fly,
> If I were you, and you were I —
> But out upon it. That cannot be:
> I must remain Lord Salisbury."

She was much impressed with the journal of Lord Carrington's little grandchild, and says, —

"We have just seen a journal, by a little boy of eight years old, of a journey from England to Sicily: the boy is Lord Mahon's son, Lord Carrington's grandson. It is one of the best journals I ever read, full of facts; exactly the writing of a child, but a very clever child."

This "clever child" became the historian, Lord Stanhope.

The following extract from a diary of Lord Byron (1821), written at Ravenna, is of interest to the reader as describing Maria during this London visit.

"In 1813 I recollect to have met them in the fashionable world of London (of which I then formed an item, a fraction, the segment of a circle, the unit of a million, the nothing of something), in the assemblies of the hour, and at a breakfast of Sir Humphry and Lady Davy's to which I was invited for the nonce. . . .

"I thought Edgeworth a fine old fellow, of a clarety, elderly, red complexion, but active, brisk, and endless. He was seventy, but did not look fifty,— no, nor forty-eight even. I had seen poor Fitzpatrick not very long before,—a man of pleasure, wit, eloquence, all things. He tottered, but still talked like a gentleman, though feebly. Edgeworth bounced about, and talked loud and long; but he seemed neither weakly nor decrepit, and hardly old.

"He began by telling 'that he had given Dr. Parr a dressing, who had taken him for an Irish bog-trotter,' etc. Now I, who know Dr. Parr, and who know (*not* by experience, — for I never should have presumed so far to contend with him, — but by hearing him *with* others, and *of* others) that it is not so easy a matter to dress him, thought Mr. Edgeworth an asserter of what was not true. He could not have stood before Parr an instant. For the rest, he seemed intelligent, vehement, vivacious, and full of life. He bids fair for a hundred years.

"He was not much admired in London; and I remember a 'ryght merrie' and conceited jest which was rife among the gallants of the day; viz., a paper had been presented for the *recall of Mrs. Siddons to the stage* (she having lately taken leave, to the loss of ages; for nothing ever

was, or can be, like her), to which all men had been called to subscribe. Whereupon Thomas Moore, of profane and poetical memory, did propose that a similar paper should be *sub*scribed and *circum*scribed for the recall of Mr. Edgeworth to Ireland.[1]

"The fact was, everybody cared more about *her*. She was a nice, little, unassuming 'Jeanie Deans looking body,' as we Scotch say, and, if not handsome, certainly not ill-looking. Her conversation was as quiet as herself. One would never have guessed she could write *her name;* whereas her father talked, *not* as if he could write nothing else, but as if nothing else was worth writing.

"As for Mrs. Edgeworth, I forget, except that I think she was the youngest of the party. Altogether, they were an excellent cage of the kind, and succeeded for two months, till the landing of Mme. de Staël.

"To turn from them to their works, I admire them; but they excite no feeling, and they leave no love, — except for some Irish steward or postilion. However, the impression of intellect and prudence is profound — and may be useful."

In "Don Juan," Byron writes of the learned lady-mother of Don Juan as supposed to paint his own wife's character. He says among other things, some of them very disagreeable, —

> "In short, she was a walking calculation,
> Miss Edgeworth's novels stepping from their covers,
> Or Mrs. Trimmer's books on education," etc.

"The Begum of literature," as Tom Moore called Mme. de Staël, made a triumphal journey through

[1] In this I rather think he was misinformed: whatever merit there may be in the jest, I have not, as far as I can recollect, the slightest claim to it.—MOORE'S NOTE.

England; where, a few years before, she had lived the life of an exile at Juniper Hall in Surrey. Her London season was a series of brilliant displays; and meteor-like she dazzled the eyes of the observer, where her modest sister in literature would only have shone with a gentle, yet steady, serene light. Her nature was well described by herself when she said, in her epigrammatic style, of the scene stretched before her at Richmond, "Calme et animée ce qu'il faut être, et ce que je ne suis pas."

A meeting between Miss Edgeworth and Mme. de Staël would have gratified Maria, who often regretted her failure in this respect in after-years.

Mr. Edgeworth left London early in June; and, after visiting the Kings at Clifton, they went to Gloucester, where Maria saw an old friend, Mrs. Chandler, who was very kind to her in early years when she visited Mr. Day, and suffered with the inflammation in her eyes. Thence they went to Malvern Links, where Mrs. Beddoes was living.

They made a visit after that at Mrs. Clifford's, "a beautiful country not far from Ross." Maria was interested in seeing the scenes of "the Man of Ross."

At Mrs. Clifford's, says an observer, "we had one day of brilliant conversation between Maria, her father, and Sir James Mackintosh, who had just come into that neighborhood. He joined us unexpectedly one morning as we were walking out, and touching a shawl Mrs. Clifford wore, 'A thousand looms,' he said, 'are at work in Cashmere providing these for you." Mackintosh sacrificed himself to his conversation. Rogers said of him, that he read

for it, thought for it, and gave up future fame for it. Some one else said that he would write any thing but his history which he had *engaged* to do; and these brilliant days in *salons* of Paris, dinners in London, and weeks in country-houses, finally frittered away this learned man's talents.

CHAPTER XIII.

Return to Ireland. — Maria begins the New Series of "Early Lessons." — A Visit from Miss Elizabeth Hamilton and Other Friends. — "Patronage" published. — Lord Dudley. — Mrs. Inchbald. — "Waverley." — Maria writes Scott. — A Visit to Dublin. — Ill Health of Mr. Edgeworth. — A Visit from Mr. Ward. — Anecdotes. — Maria at Work on "Harrington" and "Ormond."

In July Maria had "begun a new series of 'Early Lessons' (the second parts of 'Frank,' 'Rosamond,' and 'Harry and Lucy'), for which many mothers told" her they wished. She felt the pleasure of returning to literary work, after the gayety and variety of the exciting social life of London and the visits in England. She had "a famishing appetite for reading," after her long deprivation of that daily resource. In August they had a visit from Miss Elizabeth Hamilton, who was, as Maria said, very agreeable.

"I like Miss Elizabeth Hamilton better than ever upon further acquaintance. She is what the French would call '*bonne à vivre:*' so good-humored, so cheerful, so little disposed to exact attention or to take an authoritative tone in conversation, so ready to give everybody their merits, so indulgent for the follies and frailties, and so hopeful for the reformation of even the faults and vices, of the world, that it is impossible not to respect and love her. She wins upon us daily, and mixes so well with this family that I always forget she is a stranger."

Miss Hamilton in a letter to Joanna Baillie, written after her return to Scotland, said, —

"We went from friend to friend zigzag through the heart of the country, till we reached the north; but I think, of all the visits we paid, that which would be to you the most interesting was our visit to Edgeworthstown. I rejoiced to hear that you and Miss Edgeworth had met in London; but to see her to advantage, — indeed, to form any idea of her excellence, — she must be seen at home. There the sweetness of her disposition, the greatness and simplicity of her character, is continually exciting one's admiration and respect. And there Mr. Edgeworth appears in more favorable colors than in mixed society: so that he gained every day in our esteem. The rest of the family are amiable and agreeable, and all seem united to each other in the bonds of the most perfect sympathy."

Among the other visitors of this summer were Lord Carrington, Mr. Smith, Lord Gardner, and Lord and Lady Lansdowne.

Miss Edgeworth, being asked by Campbell for her impressions of Mrs. Siddons, wrote him as follows: —

Dear Sir, — I heard Mrs. Siddons read at her town-house a portion of "Henry VIII." I was more struck and delighted than I ever was with any reading in my life. This is feebly expressing what I felt. I felt that I had never before fully understood or sufficiently admired Shakspeare, or known the full powers of the human voice and the English language. *Queen Katharine* was a character peculiarly suited to her time of life and to reading. There was nothing that required gesture or vehemence incompatible with the sitting attitude. The composure and dignity, and the sort of suppressed feeling, and

touches, not bursts, of tenderness, — of matronly, not youthful, tenderness, — were all favorable to the general effect. I quite forgot to applaud: I thought she was what she appeared. The illusion was perfect till it was interrupted by a hint from her daughter or niece, I forget which, that Mrs. Siddons would be encouraged by some demonstrations given of our feelings. I then expressed my admiration, but the charm was broken, —

> "To Barry[1] we gave loud applause,
> To Garrick, only tears."

Yours, etc.,

M. E.

1813 (undated).

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, Dec. 19, 1813.

MY DEAR MRS. INCHBALD, — I have desired our publisher to send you "Patronage" before it is published. I will not tell you of my *fears* or of my hopes, in sending it to you. You will understand them all; and I am confident that you will write to me at least as frankly, now you have seen me, as you did *before we met*. I do not say, before we *became acquainted* with each other; for, in the crowds in which we met, it was impossible to become acquainted with any degree of rational intimacy.

We have to thank you, however, and we heartily do thank you, for the effort you made to gratify us, which succeeded completely. My father desires me to say, that *he* cannot help hoping that "Patronage" will come to a second edition; and he trusts that you know we are glad to profit by good advice when we can get it: therefore he earnestly *expects* your corrections for a second edition.

Mrs. Edgeworth and my father beg their kind remem-

[1] Spranger Barry was the son of a Dublin silversmith. His *Othello* was considered unsurpassed.

brances to you, and request you will assure Mr. and Mrs. Morris that we are not ungrateful travellers; that we retain a full sense of their kind and polite attentions to us; and that we thank them sincerely for introducing us to one whom we had long earnestly desired to know.

I am, my dear Mrs. Inchbald,

Yours truly,

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

In January, 1814, Miss Edgeworth had from Hunter the bookseller "a whole cargo of French translations: 'Popular Tales,' with a title under which I should never have known them, — 'Conseils à Mon Fils.' 'Manœuvring,' — 'La Mère Intrigante.' 'Ennui,' — what can they make of it in French? 'Leonora' will translate better than a better thing. 'Emilie de Coulanges,' I fear, will never stand alone. 'L'Absent,' — 'The Absentee,' — it is impossible that a Parisian can make any sense of it from beginning to end; but these things teach authors what is merely local and temporary. 'Les deux Griseldas de Chaucer et Edgeworth.' And, to crown all, two works surreptitiously printed in England, under our names, and which are *no better than they should be.*"

Sir James Mackintosh, in a letter of Dec. 24, 1813, first speaks of Mme. d'Arblay's new novel, and then says, —

"Miss Edgeworth's new novel ('Patronage'), also in four volumes, is expected in a few days. The doubts respecting it are chiefly founded on its length, or its being a novel, which is not so much her province as tales. I

have, however, little doubt that both (Mme. d'Arblay and this) will be excellent, though perhaps not invulnerable to the attacks of this sneering town."

"Patronage" was published early in 1814, and, with certain exceptions of the critics, well received; being reviewed at length by "The Edinburgh" and "The Quarterly."

Lord Dudley, who was an enthusiastic admirer of Miss Edgeworth, wrote the article on "Patronage" in "The Quarterly." He greatly admired her talents, considered her to be endowed with an original genius of high order, and enlarged on the remarkable qualities of self-restraint which she exhibits. He is impressed with the sacrifices she has made, which he thinks are peculiarly her own; among them, that of resolutely subduing her coloring, and painting her characters with the sober tints of real life. He calls her the "anti-sentimental novelist," and considers that she has formed a new style of writing novels. He justly points out, that while humor, pathos, general information, observation of society, extensive study, are all shown in her writings, though the hand of the author is never perceived, she is singularly deficient in the capacity for framing a plot. Earl Dudley's criticism is a very clever and thorough piece of work, and pleased Miss Edgeworth.

In 1814, by the desire of the Edgeworths, Mrs. Inchbald wrote a critique upon "Patronage;" the characteristics of which will be very easily seen by Maria's letter of acknowledgment: —

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, Feb. 14, 1814.

MY DEAR MRS. INCHBALD, — Nobody living but yourself could or would have written the letter I have just received from you. I wish you could have been present when it was read at our breakfast-table, that you might have seen what hearty entertainment and delight it gave a father, mother, author, aunts, brothers, sisters, all, to the number of twelve. Loud laughter at your utter detestation of poor Erasmus, as nauseous as his medicines, and your impatience at all the variety of impertinent characters who distract your attention from Lord Oldborough. Your clinging to him quite satisfied us all. It was on his character my father placed his dependence; and we all agreed that if you had not liked him, there would have been no hope for us. We are, in the main, of your opinion, that Erasmus and his letters are tiresome; but then, please to recollect that we had our moral to work out, and to show to the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the reader how in various professions young men may get on without patronage. To the good of our moral we were obliged to sacrifice: perhaps we have sacrificed in vain. Wherever we are tiresome, we may be pretty sure of this; and after all, as Mme. de Staël says, "good intentions go for nothing in works of wit" much better in French, "la bonne intention n'est de rien en fait d'esprit."

You will make me forswear truth altogether; for I find whenever I meddle with the least bit of truth I can make nothing of it, and it regularly turns out ill for me. Three things to which you object are facts, and that which you most abhor is most true.

A nobleman whom I never saw, and whose name I have forgotten (else I should not have used the anecdote), said the word which you thought I could not have written, and ought not to have known how to spell. But

pray observe the *fair* authoress does not say this odious word in her own proper person. Why impute to me the characteristic improprieties of my characters? I meant to mark the contrast between the niceness of his Grace's pride and the coarseness of his expression. I have now changed the word "severe" into "coarse," to mark this to the reader; but I cannot alter, without spoiling, the fact. I tried if *saliva* would do, but it would not: so you must bear it as well as you can, and hate his Grace of Greenwich as much as you will; but don't hate me. Did you hate Cervantes for drawing Sancho Panza eating behind the door?

My next fact is an old story. Maybe so; and maybe it belonged to your widow originally: but I can assure you it happened very lately to a gentleman in Ireland, and only the parting with the servant was added. I admit the story was ill told, and not worth telling; and *you* must admit that it is natural, or it would not have happened twice.

The sixpence under the seal is my third fact. This happened in our own family. One of my own grandfather's uncles forged a will, and my grandfather recovered the estate my father now possesses by the detection of the forgery by a sixpence under the seal. I quite agree with you that it was ill judged and awkward to tell that the old man was perjured, before his perjury was detected. I have sent to have that altered. I wish, if it is not too much trouble, you would take the trouble to alter it for me, and send your corrections to Johnson, St. Paul's Churchyard, to Mr. Miles: for I have not, and cannot get, the fourth volume; and I have been obliged to write to the corrector of the press, and to trust to his discretion, and he may bungle it. I hope the fourth volume will not be reprinted before this reaches you.

Thank you, thank you, thank you, for liking the two Clays; but pray don't envelop all the country gentlemen of England in *English Clay*.

Thank you, thank you, thank you, says my father, for liking Lady Jane Granville. Her ladyship is his favorite, but nobody has ever mentioned her in their letters but yourself. I cannot believe you ever resembled that selfish, hollow Lady Angelica.

Would you ever have guessed that the character of Rosamond is like *me?* All who know me intimately say it is as like as it is possible: those who do not know me intimately would never guess it.

Sneyd is in Dublin with his bride, — a bride no more, but dearer as a wife than bride. She was a Miss Broadhurst, and was called an heiress because she had considerable independent property. I draw largely on your belief in my veracity, when I assure you, *upon my word*, that this lady was utterly unknown to me and to this family when I wrote "The Absentee;" and that I took the name of Broadhurst because it did not belong to any person I knew, and drew the character from pure imagination. Sneyd never thought of her till after "The Absentee" was published. *Afterwards*, perhaps, it led them a little towards each other. Is not this a curious coincidence? I hardly dare tell it, it has so much the air of falsehood. She is very amiable, — not handsome, but a *tall*, not a *little*, *plain*, girl. He is *happy*, as you know he is capable of being, from having found a wife exactly suited to him, and of whom he is passionately fond.

I know enough of Mrs. Morris to be sorry for her, truly sorry, and for that kind-hearted Mr. Morris. She is exceedingly like Mrs. Edgeworth's eldest daughter, Fanny, of whom I am not a little fond. This likeness

struck Mrs. Edgeworth and I (me) so much that it added to our inclination to be intimate with Mrs. Morris; and I think I could not have long resisted jumping from acquaintanceship to familiarity with her, and fondness. Alas! perhaps I shall never see her again, or see her quite an altered person, with all the difference between happy and unhappy, — what a prodigious difference! Only those who have felt both can know. But with fine children, and such a disposition as hers, she can never be utterly unhappy; and, for her comfort, I know a gentleman, whom all the faculty gave over in the same complaint, who has lived, nevertheless, for years.

Pray tell us if you hear that Mr. Morris is better; and, whenever you *can*, remember us kindly to her. Mrs. Edgeworth says she must write a few lines to you herself, and I will not deprive you of what would be a pleasure to me.

Your obliged and grateful,

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

"Patronage," as first published, was different from the present book in some minor details. Miss Edgeworth made these changes in the third edition. The critics approved of them. It is a very unusual thing for an author to alter a book when it has made its appearance; but, in this case, the changes were considered improvements. She makes Caroline go abroad with Count Altenberg after their marriage, and Mr. Percy is *not* put in prison. In the early editions Caroline staid to console her father and mother, and Mr. Percy was thrown into prison by his creditors.

Maria visited her brother Sneyd and his wife in

their home, Baggot Street, Dublin, in March, 1814. Mr. Edgeworth had a very dangerous illness in April, after their return to Edgeworthstown. Lovell Edgeworth returned home on the 10th of May, liberated, after the long, weary fourteen years of detention, by the peace of Paris.

The appearance of "Waverley" was hailed by Miss Edgeworth as the work of a master-hand, and marking a new era in the novel-writing of the world. She wrote, "I am more delighted with it than I can tell you: it is a work of first-rate genius." When "Waverley" was about to appear, Sir Walter Scott desired Ballantyne to send a copy of it to Miss Edgeworth, with an inscription from the author.

Lockhart says that she "thanked the nameless novelist, under cover to Ballantyne, with the cordial generosity of kindred genius." This is true; but it is equally true that Maria had not received this gift from the author when she sat down, late at night, in the first fever of enthusiasm, after reading the story. She began to write before she heard the "Postscript;" and, as her father had exclaimed when the book was closed, "*Aut Scotus, aut Diabolus*," Maria placed these words at the top of her letter. Before she finished it, one of the family opened the book again, and saw the "Postscript." On reading this, Maria rather reluctantly stopped to hear it; not dreaming of the handsome tribute Scott paid her in it.

Maria was much touched and surprised by these words of Scott. He says, —

"It has been my object to describe those persons, not by a caricatured and exaggerated use of the national dialect, but by their habits, manners, and feelings; so as in some distant degree to emulate the admirable Irish portraits drawn by Miss Edgeworth; so different from the 'Teagues' and 'dear joys,' who so long, with the most perfect family resemblance to each other, occupied the drama and the novel."

He paid her a fine compliment some years later, in his general preface to the series of "Waverley Novels." The following is Miss Edgeworth's letter to the unknown author: —

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, Oct. 23, 1814.

"*Aut Scotus, aut Diabolus.*" We have this moment finished "Waverley." It was read aloud to this large family: and I wish the author could have witnessed the impression it made, — the strong hold it seized of the feelings, both of young and old; the admiration raised by the beautiful descriptions of nature, by the new and bold delineations of character; the perfect manner in which every character is sustained, in every change of situation from first to last, without effort, without the affectation of making the persons speak in character; the ingenuity with which each person introduced in the drama is made useful and necessary to the end; the admirable art with which the story is constructed, and with which the author keeps his own secrets till the precise proper moment when they should be revealed, — whilst, in the mean time, with the skill of Shakspeare, the mind is prepared by unseen degrees for all the changes of feeling and fortune, so that nothing, however extraordinary, shocks us as improbable; and the interest is kept up to

the last moment. We were so possessed with the belief that the whole story and every character in it was real, that we could not endure the occasional addresses from the author to the reader. They are like Fielding; but for that reason we cannot bear them: we cannot bear that an author of such high powers, of such original genius, should for a moment stoop to imitation. This is the only thing we dislike; these are the only passages we wish omitted in the whole work; and let the unqualified manner in which I say this, and the very vehemence of my expression of this disapprobation, be a sure pledge to the author of the sincerity of all the admiration I feel for his genius. I have not yet said half we felt in reading the work. The characters are not only finely drawn as separate figures, but they are grouped with great skill, and contrasted so artfully, and yet so naturally, as to produce the happiest dramatic effect, and at the same time to relieve the feelings and attention in the most agreeable manner. The novelty of the Highland world, which is discovered to our view, excites curiosity and interest powerfully; but, though it is all new to us, it does not embarrass or perplex or strain the attention. We never are harassed by doubts of the probability of any of these modes of life. Though we do not know them, we are quite certain they did exist exactly as they are represented. We are sensible that there is a peculiar merit in the work, which is, in a measure, lost upon us, — the *dialects* of the Highlanders and the Lowlanders, etc. But there is another and a higher merit, in which we are as much struck and as much delighted as any true-born Scotchman could be: the various gradations of Scotch feudal character, from the highborn chieftain and the military baron, to the noble-minded lieutenant Evan Dhu, the robber Bean Lean, and the savage Callum Beg. The Pre—

The Chevalier is beautifully drawn. "A prince: ay, every inch a prince." His polished manners, his exquisite address, politeness, and generosity, interest the reader irresistibly; and he pleases the more from the contrast between him and those who surround him. I think he is my favorite character: the Baron Bradwardine is my father's. He thinks it required more genius to invent, and more ability uniformly to sustain, this character than any one of the masterly characters with which the book abounds. There is, indeed, uncommon art in the manner in which his dignity is preserved by his courage and magnanimity, in spite of all his pedantry and his *ridicules*, and his bear and bootjack, and all the raillery of MacIvor. MacIvor's unexpected "bear and bootjack" made us laugh heartily.

But to return to the dear good baron. Though I acknowledge that I am not as good a judge as my father and brothers are of his recondite learning and his law Latin, yet I feel the humor, and was touched to the quick by the strokes of generosity, gentleness, and pathos, in this old man; who is, by the by, all in good time, worked up into a very dignified father-in-law for the hero. His exclamation of "Oh, my son, my son!" and the yielding of the fictitious character of the baron to the natural feelings of the father, is beautiful. (Evan Dhu's fear that his father-in-law should die quietly in his bed made us laugh almost as much as the bear and the bootjack.)

Jinker in the battle, pleading the cause of the mare he had sold to Balmanwhapple, and which had thrown him for want of a proper bit, is truly comic. My father says this, and some other passages respecting horsemanship, could not have been written by any one who was not master both of the great and little horse.

I tell you without order the great and little strokes of

humor and pathos just as I recollect, or am reminded of them at this moment by my companions. The fact is, that we have had the volumes only during the time we could read them, and as fast as we could read, lent us as a great favor by one who was happy enough to have secured a copy before the first and second editions were sold in Dublin. When we applied, not a copy could be had: we expect one in the course of next week, but we resolved to write to the author without waiting for a second perusal. Judging by our feelings as authors, we guess that he would rather know our genuine first thoughts, than wait for cool second thoughts, or have a regular eulogium or criticism put in the most lucid manner, and given in the finest sentences that ever were rounded.

Is it possible that I have got thus far without having named Flora or Vich Ian Vohr, — the *last Vich Ian Vohr!* Yet our minds were full of them the moment I began this letter; and could you have seen the tears forced from us by their fate, you would have been satisfied that the pathos went to our hearts. Ian Vohr, from the first moment he appears till the last, is an admirably drawn and finely sustained character, — new, perfectly new, to the English reader, often entertaining, always heroic, sometimes sublime. The Gray spirit, the Bodach Glas, thrills *us* with horror. *Us!* What effect must it have upon those under the influence of the superstitions of the Highlands? This circumstance is admirably introduced. This superstition is a weakness quite consistent with the strength of character, perfectly natural after the disappointment of all his hopes, in the dejection of his mind, and the exhaustion of his bodily strength.

Flora we could wish was never called "Miss MacIvor;" because in this country there are tribes of vulgar Miss *Macs*, and this association is unfavorable to the sublime

and beautiful of *your* Flora. She is a true heroine. Her first appearance seized upon the mind and enchanted us so completely, that we were certain she was to be your heroine, and the wife of your hero. But with what inimitable art you gradually convinced the reader that she was not, as she said of herself, *capable of making Waverley happy.* Leaving her in full possession of our admiration, you first made us pity, then love, and at last give our undivided affection to Rose Bradwardine — sweet Scotch Rose. The last scene between Flora and Waverley is highly pathetic. My brother wishes that "*bridal garment*" were "*shroud*," because when the heart is touched we seldom use metaphor, or quaint alliteration: "bride favors," "bridal garment." There is one thing more we could wish changed or omitted in Flora's character. I have not the volume, and therefore cannot refer to the page: but I recollect in the first visit to Flora, when she is to sing certain verses, there is a walk in which the description of the place is beautiful, but *too long;* and we did not like the preparation for a *scene*, — the appearance of Flora and her harp was too like a common heroine. She should be far above all *stage* effect or novelists' tricks.

These are, without reserve, the only faults we found or *can* find in this work of genius. We should scarcely have thought them worth mentioning, except to give you proof positive that we are not flatterers. Believe me, I have not, nor can I convey to you the full idea of the pleasure, the delight, we have had in reading "Waverley," nor of the feeling of sorrow with which we came to the end of the history of persons whose real presence had so filled our minds. We felt that we must return to the *flat realities* of life, that our stimulus was gone; and we were little disposed to read the "Postscript," — which should have been a preface.

"Well, let us hear it," said my father; and Mrs. Edgeworth read on.

Oh, my dear sir, how much pleasure would my father, my mother, my whole family, as well as myself, have lost, if we had not read to the last page! And the pleasure came upon us so unexpectedly! We had been so completely absorbed, that every thought of ourselves, of our own authorship, was far, far away.

Thank you for the honor you have done us, and for the pleasure you have given us, great in proportion to the opinion we had formed of the work we had just perused; and believe me, every opinion I have in this letter expressed was formed before any individual in the family had peeped to the end of the book, or knew how much we owed you.

Your obliged and grateful

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

The intense interest of the reading public over each new "Waverley" novel was also felt in the literary world. There was not much doubt as to the authorship among Scott's literary friends. Miss Hamilton said of "Waverley" and "Guy Mannering," "though the name of Scott does not grace the titlepage, it is seen on every other page of both performances."

Miss Catherine Sinclair said to Sir Walter before he confessed himself to be the author of the novels, "If you will tell me which of these novels you prefer, I shall tell you in return which of them has the preference given to it by a very good authority, — Miss Edgeworth." Sir Walter agreed to the bargain: and she told him that her brother had put the question to Miss Edgeworth; and she replied to Mr.

Sinclair, "There is a freshness about the first novel, which, in my opinion, gives it an undoubted superiority over all the rest."—"Well, Miss Sinclair," said Sir Walter, "I, for my part, enjoyed 'The Antiquary' more than any other. There are touches of pathos in it which much affected me, and I had many a hearty laugh at the expense of the antiquary himself."—"Yes," replied Miss Sinclair, "the author of these novels, whoever he may be, is always laughing at somebody; and, in the case of the antiquary, the person he is laughing at is evidently himself."

In January of 1815 Mr. and Mrs. Sneyd Edgeworth went to England, and they offered their house in Dublin to Mr. Edgeworth. Maria passed some weeks very pleasantly in Dublin, with her father and mother. Mr. Edgeworth had been invited by the Dublin Society to try some experiments on wheel-carriages, which he successfully did during this visit. During this winter Mr. Edgeworth, whose health had been failing since his illness of the previous year, was under the kind and friendly care of Sir Philip Crampton, the surgeon-general. He did all he could to alleviate the sufferings of his patient, but it was evident that Mr. Edgeworth's health was seriously impaired. Their stay in Dublin was also saddened by the death of Sir Edward Pakenham, who led the British forces at the battle of New Orleans, U.S.A. Mr. Edgeworth was much attached to this gallant soldier and relative. In the spirited lines of Mrs. Hemans to the memory of Sir Edward, she says,—

"Yet hast thou still (though victory's flame
In that last moment cheered thee not)
Left Glory's isle another name,
That ne'er may be forgot."

Maria about this time, in describing Lady Louisa Conolly, daughter of the Duke of Richmond, and sister of the second Mrs. Napier, mother of the Napiers of Peninsular fame, said Lady Louisa was "all that I could have wished to represent in Mrs. Hungerford; and her figure and countenance gave me back the image in my mind."

Mr. Edgeworth was ill most of the time during this year, and the anxiety overshadowed Maria's happiness more and more. She strove very hard to repress her feelings, and wrote more or less all the time, at his urgent request.

Miss Edgeworth wrote to Mrs. Barbauld, after reading the attack of "The London Quarterly" on the poem of that venerable lady, called "1811."

"I cannot describe to you the indignation, or rather the disgust, that we felt at the manner in which you are treated in 'The Quarterly Review:' so ungentlemanlike, so unjust, so insolent, a review I never read. My father and I, in the moment of provocation, snatched up our pens to answer it; but a minute's reflection convinced us that silent contempt is the best answer, that we should not suppose it possible that it can hurt anybody with the generous British public but the reviewers themselves. The lines even which they have picked out with most malicious intent are excellent, and speak for themselves. But it is not their criticism on your poem which incenses me: it is the odious tone in which they dare to speak

of the most respectable and elegant female writer that England can boast. The public, the *public*, will do you justice!"

In the year 1816 Mr. and Miss Edgeworth published a small volume called "Readings on Poetry." It contains selections from "The Enfield Speaker," with other pieces, and some detached sentences. An essay on parody contained a short and clear description of the world's great parodies, beginning with Homer's "Batracho Myomachia." This book, which its editors and authors say in the preface was prepared in "the hope of being useful," had a wide range of selections; but the original intention of making it suitable for the young was carefully followed, and the explanations were clear and easily comprehended. The book, however, was not of much importance.

In 1816 Maria enlarged the plan of the volume of plays which she intended as "Popular Plays," to take the same place for a certain class of readers that the "Popular Tales" did. It was completed in 1817, and published in that year, in one volume, containing "Love and Law," "The Two Guardians," and "The Rose, Thistle, and Shamrock." In subsequent editions of her works, "The Two Guardians" was omitted.

Mrs. Barbauld had not heard from Miss Edgeworth for some time, and expressed some doubts as to her interest in herself; to which Maria replied as follows: —

My dear Mrs. Barbauld, — Your kind, warm, friendly letter has set my heart at ease upon a subject which has long been very painful to me. I feared, and I could not bear to think, that I had lost that place in your esteem and affection with which I knew that you once honored me. I could not bear the idea that you suspected me of being so weak, so vain, so senseless, as to have my brain turned by a little fashionable flattery, and to have so changed my character as not to feel the difference between *your friendship* and the commonplace compliments of *Lady This* and *That* and *T'other*. Your letter has dissipated all the very painful fancies and real fears that have been growing and preying upon me these two years. Thank you, — "*on the knees of my heart*" I thank you. And be assured that your condescension and goodness in begging my pardon, when I ought to have begged, and did a hundred times in my secret soul beg, yours, is not thrown away upon me.

So we will now go on where we left off, too long ago. I will write whenever I have any thing to say that I wish to say to you, whether it be worth your hearing or not; and if you do not answer me, I will only *regret:* I promise you I will never be angry, nor will I ever more fret myself with the notion that you are angry with me. God bless Mrs. Baillie for breaking the ice between us!

You have no idea how long, how terribly long, it is before books of any substantial merit reach this remote, ultimate Edgeworthstown. Such trash as "Glenarvon," and such mischief as "Bertram," come too fast, poisoning all the wind. We have book societies in the country, and do order books of merit and reputation; but it is a tedious time before the Dublin booksellers get them, as they dare not write for them on their own account. I shall immediately bespeak Dr. Aikin's "Annals" for our

society. We shall anxiously expect Miss Aikin's "Reign of Elizabeth." Have you seen a book of Dr. Millar's on the "Philosophy of History"? The introductory chapter is well done, but I fear there is a *vice de construction* in the plan of the book. The witty, bitterly witty, Plunket told him, that, with such a plan, he should not have published the book *till the day of judgment.* His plan, you know, is to show that all history forms a moral drama. Now, till the drama is finished, how can he come to the moral? and without omniscience, how can he see the connection of the parts and the whole?

I have lately seen a poem which reminded me of the *spirit* of your "1811." I do not mean to say in the versification, for that is unharmonious and often defective; but I admire in it the noble spirit of patriotism and virtue, his *classical taste*, and *anti-Byron* principles. The poem I mean is "Greece," by Mr. Haygarth. I know nothing of him; but I think if he cultivates his interests, he may either become a fine historian or a fine tragedian. This praise implies a great range of mind: but I do not say he is — I say he may become — all this; and I should very much wish to know whether you think the same.

On the contrary, I do not think that the author of "Bertram,"[1] though he has written a successful tragedy, will ever write a good tragedy, — feeling run mad!

As to "Glenarvon," it surely can *do* no mischief: it is such nonsense. I stuck fast in the blood and love in the second volume, and in that condition fell fast asleep, and never would have opened my eyes on the third volume, but that my father begged me to read the death of the Princess of Madagascar, which seems, with all that relates to the princess, to be written by a pen

[1] The Rev. R. C. Maturin.

much superior to Lady Caroline Lamb's. Who wrote it? Is it known?

We have just got a little book called "Display," a tale for young people, which we like much. It is written by the daughter of a physician, a Miss Jane Taylor, who keeps a school near Dublin. I am not acquainted with her. The *good* people in this book are more to my taste than those in "Cœlebs," because they are not so meddling. I only wish they had not objected to young people going to balls. Before I could finish my sentence, in praise of all the good sense and excellent writing of this tale, a circle of young and old ladies were open-mouthed with the question, — But why object to balls? I hope you like "The Antiquary." And I hope you have no doubt of its having been written by Walter Scott.

We have just received two numbers of a new "Journal of the Arts and Sciences," edited at the Royal Institution of Great Britain. Like it much. Glad to see Sir Humphry Davy's lamp lighting him back to the paths of science, from the bootless excursion he took into the land of fashion. Better be the first than the last of a class. Better be the first man of science than the last man of fashion, — especially, as he can be the one, and cannot be the other.

In the first number of this journal, there is a paper, by Dr. Park, on the laws of sensation, which my father admires very much.

I think the *nerves* will give physicians and philosophers enough to do for the next century. The *humorers* have had their day.

Here is a gentleman in our neighborhood, who one year imagines himself to be without bones, and another year without muscles, and one year is a Harry-long-legs, and another a man; and all the time eats and drinks

heartily, and wears a coat like other men, and is not considered as *more* than nervous.

I will now finish, lest you should repent having let loose my pen upon you. My father has been better lately, but his health is far from strong. I say as little as I can upon this subject: it is too near my heart. Mrs. Edgeworth is in as blooming, happy, and useful health as when you knew her at Clifton.

I wish, my dear Mrs. Barbauld, I could transport you into this large, cheerful family, where everybody — from little Pakenham at four years old, to the old housekeeper, "eldest of forms" — would do every thing in their power to make you feel quite at home. You should never see any washing-day[1] but *one*.

Your friend, Lord Longford, has just written us word that he is going to be married; and from his own, and the impartial account of his dear sister (commonly called the Duchess of Wellington), the lady he has chosen will not only permanently please himself, but satisfy the anxious wishes of his host of family friends. She is Lady Georgina Lygon, tenth daughter of Lord Beauchamp. He says she will not permit him to be an "absentee:" so we shall now have him again settled at Pakenham Hall, within ten miles of us. Now, my dear Mrs. Barbauld, could not you summon up resolution enough to be seasick for six hours, say ten at the utmost, to make us happy, and I hope yourself, for as many months? I have two brothers now at Cheltenham, Lovell and Sneyd, both known to you, both coming over to Ireland, Mrs. Sneyd Edgeworth also: could you not come with them? Anna (Mrs. Beddoes) also coming in the spring.

Think of what has been said! and do not tremble at the thoughts of my pestering you often with such long

[1] A playful poem of Mrs. Barbauld's.

letters, for I assure you it is not my habit; but, in the warmth of heart kindled by your warm, affectionate letter, all this poured out.

Your affectionate, obliged, and grateful friend,

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

In 1816 Maria received a letter from an American Jewess, a Miss Rachel Mordecai of Virginia, gently reproaching her with having made Jews ridiculous and odious in her novels and tales, and begging her to give the world a picture of a good Jew. This was the origin of the story of "Harrington," and the beginning of an interesting correspondence with Miss Mordecai and her family, which lasted many years.

In August, 1816, Miss Edgeworth, in touching on the subject of Lord Byron's conduct, says, —

"Everybody is writing and talking about Lord Byron, but I am tired of the subject. The 'all for murder, all for crime' system of poetry will now go out of fashion: as long he appeared an outrageous villain he might have ridden triumphantly on the storm; but he has now shown himself too base, too mean, too contemptible, for anything like a heroic devil."

In September, though the house was full of company, Maria "was in her own little den," writing hard. The house was full, when a letter from "the great R. Ward," was brought her. He, meantime, was waiting in the carriage to hear if he would be admitted. She hoped it was "the Mr. Ward (Lord Ward and Dudley) who made the speech, and wrote the review of 'Patronage' in 'The Quarterly,' and

of whom Mme. de Staël said he was the only man in England who really understood the art of conversation." He proved to be "a very gentlemanlike, agreeable man, full of anecdotes, *bon mots*, and compliments;" but not Lord Dudley. He "was under-secretary of state during a great part of Pitt's administration, and has been one of the lords of the admiralty, and is now clerk of the ordnance, and has been sent to Ireland to reform abuses in the ordnance. He told me that he had heard in London that I had a sort of *memoria technica*, by which I could remember every thing that was said in conversation, and by certain motions of my fingers, could, while people were talking to me, note down all the ridiculous points. He happened to have passed some time in his early life at Lichfield, and knew Miss Seward and Dr. Darwin, and many other people my father and aunts knew. He repeated, among other good things, the following lines by Dr. Mansel, the Bishop of Bristol, on Miss Seward and Mr. Hayley's flattering each other: —

"'Prince of poets, England's glory, Mr. Hayley, *that* is you!'
'Ma'am, you carry all before you, Lichfield's own, indeed you do!'
'In epic, elegy, or sonnet, Mr. Hayley, you're divine!'
'Madam, take my word upon it, you yourself are all the *Nine*.'"

Maria kept busy all this summer at "Harrington" and "Ormond;" and in February of 1817, as she drove with her father to visit Lord Longford's bride at Pakenham Hall, she read to him in the carriage the first chapter of "Ormond." It was the last visit

Mr. Edgeworth paid anywhere. He had expressed a wish to Maria that she should write a story as a companion to "Harrington;" and with all the anguish of heart which oppressed her natural spirits, at the sight of seeing her father suffering such pain, and daily growing weaker, she made a strong effort to amuse him. By a wonderful exertion of love and genius, she produced the gay and spirited pages of "Ormond;" among which may be found some of her most vivacious scenes, her inimitable characters. Wit, humor, and pathos made the story a bright entertainment for the sufferer; who could not have realized in a line of its pages the aching heart which dictated it. The book was read chapter by chapter in her father's room.

In the introduction to "Harold the Dauntless," published in 1817, Scott, in his address to "Ennui," pays Miss Edgeworth the following pretty compliment: —

> "Then of the books to call thy drowsy glance
> Compiled, what bard the catalogue may quote!
> Plays, poems, novels, never read but once:
> But not of such the tale fair Edgeworth wrote;
> That bears thy name, and is thine antidote."

The author of that amusing society novel of that time, "Cecil the Coxcomb," says in quite a digression on "Ennui," —

> "The powerful novel of Miss Edgeworth gave a sort of unnatural emphasis to the word in the mouths of my countrymen."

In another place the same novelist calls Maria "the wise daughter of a learned father."

Maria says of her father's share in the composition of "Ormond," —

"The following parts of 'Ormond' were, as well as I can recollect, written for me by my dear father in his last illness: the death of King Corny (I am not sure of the pages, and do not like to look for them); but I know it is from the time of the return from shooting to the end of that chapter where Ormond 'loses the best friend he had in the world.'

"The whole of Moriarty's history of his escape from prison was *dictated*, without the alteration or hesitation of a word, to Honora and to me.

"Also the meeting between Moriarty and his wife, when he jumps out of the carriage the moment he hears her voice. My father corrected the whole by having it read to him many, many times; often working at it in his bed for hours together, — once, at the end, for six hours together, — between the intervals of sickness and exquisite pain. . . .

"The history Mr. Edgeworth heard from the actual hero of it, Michael Dunne, whom he chanced to meet in the town of Navan, where he was living respectably. He kept a shop where Mr. Edgeworth went to purchase some boards; and, observing something very remarkable in the man's countenance, he questioned him as they were looking at the timber in his yard, and he very readily told his tale, almost in the very words used by Moriarty."

CHAPTER XIV.

Letter to Mrs. Inchbald, with "Comic Dramas."—Continued Illness of Mr. Edgeworth.—His Death.—Maria's Distress.—No Work done for Many Months.—Maria rouses herself to work on her Father's "Memoir."—A Visit to Bowood.—Lord and Lady Lansdowne.—Dumont.—Moore's Diary.—Other Visits.—The Grove.—Hampstead.—The Misses Baillie.—Again at Bowood.—Byrkeley Lodge.—Trentham.—Smethwick.—Lady Elizabeth Whitbread's House.—Kensington Gore.—London Friends.—Duchess of Wellington.—Deep Dene.—Home.—"Memoir."

[With "Comic Dramas."]

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, May 17, 1817.

MY DEAR MRS. INCHBALD,—I am really anxious to hear your opinion of my little "Comic Dramas;" because you are one of the very few persons in the world who *can* form a decided opinion, and who *will* have the courage to tell the truth to an author.

Let me request then, my dear madam, that, as soon as you have read these dramatic *attempts*, you will write to me: one of your truly *original* and entertaining letters will gratify us, independently of all selfish considerations.

My father's health continues to be very precarious. His pleasures all now depend on his taste for literature and on the affection of his friends.

He is fortunate in having excellent correspondents among the wisest and best people now living.

You will not consider it as an idle or a propitiatory compliment, if I assure you that he is now more anxious for

a letter from Mrs. Inchbald than from any person in England.

Your obliged and affectionate,

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

MY DEAR MRS. INCHBALD, — Though I can only say "*ditto*" to my father, yet I must add with my own hand my thanks to you; lest you should imagine that I am vexed or affronted, and unworthy, after all, to hear the truth. Believe me, *I am* worthy and fit to hear it. I know the inestimable value to an author of one friend, and one good judge, who has the courage to speak the truth. I have felt this all my life. My father has always told me the truth as far as parental partiality allowed it to be possible. He has always seen the truth, and foretold to me what the best judges would think. I have had some experience of the flattery bestowed on authors, and the reluctance that almost all people feel to hazard themselves by saying any thing but what is immediately agreeable: therefore, I know how fully to appreciate your courage, integrity, and generous regard for me. Show me that you believe me to be sincere, and worthy of your good opinion, by writing with the same frankness about the tales which you shall soon receive.

Would you ever have guessed from my father's letter, that it is written — that is dictated — by a man who is very ill, who has been suffering daily and nightly under a dispiriting bilious sickness these two years, and who has lost twelve pounds weight in the last three months? But he has an unconquerable mind, and affection for his friends that no personal sufferings can abate. I wish you had seen, or rather known, more of him: you are worthy to know him thoroughly.

I am your obliged and grateful,

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

Mr. Edgeworth, in writing to Lady Romilly by dictation the 8th of June, only five days before his death, showed how strongly his feelings were enlisted for Maria. He says, —

"The little 'Dramas'[1] which you mention are inferior performances, upon which I assure you we set small value. They, however, sell well; which we are glad of on our publisher's account. In a few days I hope you will receive Maria's new tales. I do acknowledge that I set a high value upon them. They have cheered the lingering hours of my illness; and they have — I speak literally — given me more pleasure during confinement than could be imagined from the nature of my illness."

The preface to "Harrington" and "Ormond" was written but a little while before Mr. Edgeworth's death. It was dated May 31. It was the last he ever wrote for Maria. In a letter about these tales he said, —

"Maria's tales will soon issue from the press. If they fail of succeeding with the public, you will hear of my hanging myself."

To the last, in spite of pain and weakness, his mind was clear and active, and his judgment vigorous.

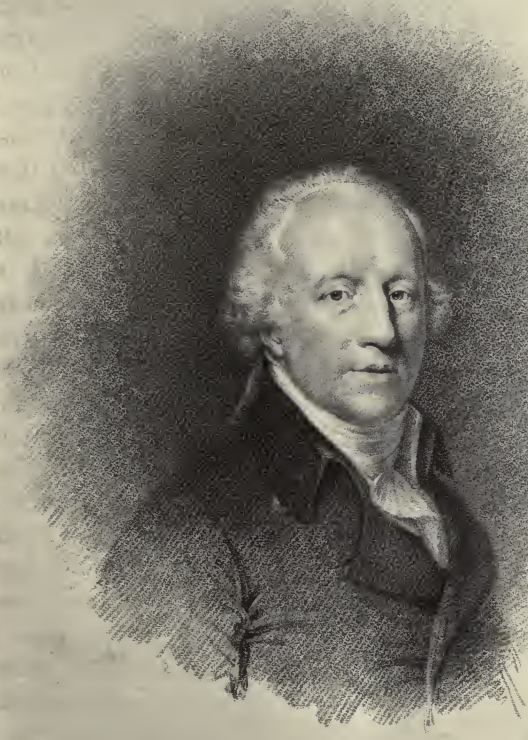
The last critical office Mrs. Inchbald did for Miss Edgeworth was to read the volumes containing "Harrington" and "Ormond" and "Thoughts on Bores." Mrs. Inchbald's biographer says she was "greatly astonished at the amazing fertility of the

[1] Comic Dramas.

Muse of Erin." The same thought must strike any one who looks on Miss Edgeworth's works: they are so numerous; and yet the character of her writing is well sustained, and her spirit does not flag. She owed much to her father's kindly encouragement and counsel. It is useless now to question what might have been Maria's position as a writer if she had been left to follow the bent of her genius, unaided by her father's advice. "Helen," written long after his death, would serve to reveal something of the effect which Mr. Edgeworth had on his daughter's writing. It shows a lighter hand, a greater ease in handling dialogue, and a more natural inconsistency in its characters, than she was allowed by her father. Helen and Beauclerc, Lady Davenant and Lady Cecilia, are very real characters. The hand of Miss Edgeworth had not lost its cunning, but her natural timidity was so great that she could not work after her life-long support was removed. She had accustomed herself to lean upon what she considered her father's superior knowledge of the world and literary judgment, until she was unfitted for independent literary work for a time.

Mr. Edgeworth died June 13, 1817; and the rest of this year was a painful blank in Maria's life, which had heretofore been almost a dual one. This extraordinary man, in his seventy-second year, in a fragment on education, said, "Providence has blessed me with six children by my present wife, in addition to twelve that I had before;"[1] and he then dilates

[1] He had, in all, twenty-two children born to him. Several died in infancy.



Engraved by A Carden

R. L. EDGEWORTH.

1816.

on his views on the education of children, and his wishes for the future of his grandchildren. He wrote once, jocosely, an epitaph on himself, ending, "There's an edge to his wit, and there's worth in his heart."

The long strain removed, by the death of her father, Maria was completely unnerved; and for months she was very wretched. Her great efforts to cheer her dying father, and the excessive application on "Ormond," had quite injured her eyes; and she was obliged to give up reading, letter-writing, and all kinds of needlework. She learned at this time to knit, and found it an interesting employment as she began to take up the daily duties of life.

Sir Walter Scott was always quoting Miss Edgeworth, or alluding to some of her characters. In a letter of 1817, written to Jeffrey, he compares himself at Abbotsford to "one of Miss Edgeworth's heroines: master of all things in miniature, — a little hill and a little glen, and a little horse-pond of a loch, and — a little river I was going to call it — the Tweed; but I remember the minister was mobbed by his parishioners for terming it in his statistical report an inconsiderable stream." And he then describes himself as being in the "mortar-tub," and busy building.

In the last weeks of this sad year Maria made a visit at Black Castle, and went thence to Collon to join Mrs. Edgeworth, who had been with her children at her father's house. The Misses Sneyd left Edgeworthstown for their brother's home, Byrkeley Lodge, Staffordshire, in consequence of an agree-

ment made to that effect before the death of Mr. Edgeworth. They took with them Honora, who now returned to Ireland after this visit to England, and found Maria and her step-mother at Collon in January. Shortly after they all went back to Edgeworthstown. Lovell Edgeworth wished his step-mother to make it her home, as in his father's lifetime.

This was a very sad return, for the loss of the husband and father was made more evident to them in the home they had enjoyed together. Two wet seasons had brought a famine, typhus-fever, and much suffering and death among their poor tenantry. A painful duty lay before Maria, and one she found it difficult to perform to her own satisfaction.

Mr. Edgeworth had enjoined on Maria the task of completing his memoir, written by himself up to the year 1782. In the introduction to his early memoir, he says,—

"My beloved daughter Maria, at my earnest request, has promised to revise, complete, and publish her father's life."

Her sisters copied many letters, and also wrote from dictation, to save Maria's eyes, which were still far from strong; and she began to work as much as possible at what she considered as a sacred duty. She bitterly realized the loss of her father's encouraging words and sympathetic yet impartial advice in her very difficult undertaking.

In the spring of 1818 Lord Carrington offered Mrs. Edgeworth an appointment in the East-India Civil Service; and this was accepted for her son

Pakenham, who left home soon after for India, where he lived many years. The illness of William Edgeworth called Mrs. Edgeworth to England during this season.

Lady Lansdowne wrote Maria at this time, pressingly inviting her to Bowood, and telling that "M. Dumont is expected in May or June, and oh that you would meet him at Bowood! few things in this world could give me more pleasure." Maria thought favorably of this kind invitation, and accepted it later in the year.

Maria had a correspondent in Philadelphia, who wrote her of the intense interest felt in America about the Waverley novels, saying, —

"'Waverley,' 'Guy Mannering,' etc., have excited as much enthusiasm in America as in Europe. Boats are now actually on the lookout for 'Rob Roy,' all here are so impatient to get the first sight of it."

As Maria was very anxious to meet M. Dumont, and have his opinion of her life of her father, she accepted the cordial invitation of Lady Lansdowne, and went, accompanied by her sister Honora, to Bowood, where they arrived the 7th of September, 1818. On her way there she made visits to her sisters, Mrs. Beddoes and Mrs. King.

Previous to this journey she was at her brother Sneyd's in Wicklow County, and in speaking of the "Memoir," and her share in it, to Mrs. Stark of Glasgow, said, —

"I am, and have been ever since I could command my attention, intent upon finishing these memoirs of

himself which my father left me to finish, and charged me to publish. I am now within two months' work of finishing all I mean to write; but the work of revision and consideration — oh! most anxious consideration."

M. Dumont was "very much pleased with my father's manuscript," Maria wrote: "he has read a good deal of mine, and likes it. He hates Mr. Day in spite of all his good qualities: he says he knows he could not bear that sort of a man, who has such pride and misanthropies about trifles, raising a great theory of morals upon an *amour propre blessé*."

She describes the life at Bowood as delightful, saying in one letter, —

"Now I will tell you how we pass our day. At seven I get up, — this morning half-past six, to have the pleasure of writing to you; breakfast at half after nine, very pleasant; afterwards we all *stray* into the library for a few minutes, and settle when we shall meet again for walking, etc.; then Lady Lansdowne goes to her dear dressing-room, and dear children, Dumont to his attic, Lord Lansdowne to his out-of-door work, and we to our elegant dressing-room, and Miss Carnegy to hers. Between one and two, luncheon: happy time! Lady Lansdowne is so cheerful, polite, and easy, just as she was in her walks at Edgeworthstown; but very different walks are the walks we take here, most various and delightful: from dressed knots, shrubbery, and park walks, to fields with inviting paths, wide downs, shady, winding lanes, happy cottages, not *dressed*, but naturally well placed, and with evidence in every part of their being well suited to the inhabitants. After walk, dress and make haste for dinner. Dinner always pleasant, because Lord and

Lady Lansdowne converse so agreeably — Dumont also towards the dessert. After dinner we find the children in the drawing-room. I like them better and better the more I see of them. When there is company, a whist-table for the gentlemen. Dumont read out one evening one of Corneille's plays, 'Le Florentin,' beautiful, and beautifully read. We asked for one of Molière; but he said to Lord Lansdowne that it was impossible to read out Molière without a quicker eye than he had *pour de certains propos*. They went to the library, and brought out at last as odd a choice as could well be made, with Mr. Thomas Grenville as auditor, — 'Le Vieux Célibataire,' an excellent play, interesting and lively throughout, and the old bachelor himself a charming character. Dumont read it as well as Tessier could have read it; but there were things which seemed as if they were written on purpose for the célibataire who was listening and the célibataire who was reading.

"Lord Lansdowne, when I asked him to describe Rocca[1] to me, said he heard him give an answer to Lord Byron which marked the indignant frankness of his mind. Lord Byron at Coppet had been going on abusing the stupidity of the good people of Geneva: Rocca at last turned short upon him, 'Eh! Milord, pourquoi donc venez-vous vous *fourrer* parmi ces honnêtes gens?'

"Mme. de Staël, — I fumble anecdotes together as I recollect them, — Mme. de Staël had a great wish to see Mr. Bowles the poet, or, as Lord Byron calls him, 'the sonneteer.' She admired his sonnets, and his spirit of maritime discovery, and ranked him high as an English genius. In riding to Bowood he fell, and sprained his shoulder, but still came on. Lord Lansdowne alluded to this in presenting him to Mme. de Staël before dinner,

[1] Second husband of Mme. de Staël.

in the midst of the listening circle. She began to compliment him and herself upon the exertion he had made to come and see her. 'Oh, ma'am! say no more, for I would have done a great deal more to see so great a CURIOSITY!'

"Lord Lansdowne says it is impossible to describe the *shock* in Mme. de Staël's face, — the breathless astonishment, and the total change produced in her opinion of the man. She said afterwards to Lord Lansdowne, who had told her he was a simple country clergyman, 'Je vois bien que ce n'est qu'un simple curé qui n'a pas le sens commun, quoi que grand poète.'

"Lady Lansdowne, just as I was writing this, came to my room and paid me half an hour's visit. She brought back my father's manuscript, which I had lent to her to read. She was exceeding interested in it: she says, 'It is not only entertaining, but interesting, as showing how such a character was formed. When he was settled at Hare Hatch, after his first marriage, he seemed as much out of fortune's way as possible; and yet he found occupations which led to distinction, and he formed that friendship for Mr. Day which was so honorable to both.' She admires and loves Mr. Day as much as Dumont dislikes him."

On the occasion of this visit at Bowood, there were, by turns, several sets of people, — Mr. Grenville, Lord and Lady Grenville, Lord and Lady Bathurst, and others. In concluding her visit, Maria wrote, —

"This visit to Bowood has surpassed my expectation in every respect. I much enjoy the sight of Lady Lansdowne's happiness with her husband and her children, —

beauty, fortune, cultivated society, in short, every thing that the most reasonable or unreasonable could wish. She is so amiable, and so desirous to make others happy, that it is impossible not to love her; and the most envious of mortals, I think, would have the heart opened to sympathy with her. They are so fond of each other, and show it, and *don't show it*, in the most agreeable manner. His conversation is very varied and natural, full of information given for the sake of those to whom he speaks, never for display. What he says lets us into his feelings and character always, and therefore interests me."

Of Lord Lansdowne's conversation, Maria gives some examples: —

"I observed one day at dinner at Bowood, that children have very early a desire to produce an effect, a sensation in company. 'Yes,' said Lord Lansdowne, 'I remember distinctly having that feeling, and acting upon it once in a large and august company, when I was a young boy, at the time of the French Revolution, when the Duke and Duchesse de Polignac came to Bowood, and my father was anxious to receive these illustrious guests with all due honor. One Saturday evening, when they were all sitting in state in the drawing-room, my father introduced me; and I was asked to give the company a sermon. The text I chose was, quite undesignedly, 'Put not your trust in princes.' The moment I had pronounced the words, I saw my father's countenance change; and I saw changes in the countenances of the duke and duchess, and of every face in the circle. I saw I was the cause of this; and, though I knew my father wanted to stop me, I would go on, to see what would be the effect. I repeated my text, and preached upon it, and as I went on made out what it was that affected the congregation.'

"Afterwards Lord Shelburne desired him to go round the circle and wish the company good-night; but, when he came to the Duchesse de Polignac, he could not resolve to kiss her: he so detested the patch of rouge on her cheek, he started back. Lord Shelburne whispered a bribe in his ear: no, he would not; and they were obliged to laugh it off. But his father was very much vexed.

"Another day we were talking of 'Glenarvon;' and I said we thought the Princess of Madagascar, Lady Holland, so good, that we fancied it had been inserted by a better hand; but Lord Lansdowne said it was certainly written by Lady Caroline Lamb herself: she was provoked to it by a note of good advice from Lady Holland. I said I thought the book so stupid I could hardly get through it; and Lord Lansdowne said, that but for curiosity to see what would be said of particular people, he could not have got to the end of it. 'And, besides the natural curiosity about my friends and acquaintances,' he added, 'I expected to find myself abused.'"

In Moore's diary for 1818, he mentioned this visit at Bowood, near which place he lived, and where he was a constant visitor: —

"Dined at Bowood: the company, two Miss Edgeworths and Dumont; Mr. Grenville, to my regret, was gone. I wanted to uncork (to me an old joke) whatever remains of *Old Sherry* he might have in him. Lady Lansdowne said he had mentioned the subject of Sheridan's letters to her, etc. Talked with Dumont before dinner; told me Miss Edgeworth was preparing her father's memoirs for the press; said that the details of a life passed usefully in that middling class of society must always be interesting. In the evening Miss Edgeworth delightful, not from display, but from repose and unaffect-

edness, — the least pretending person of the company. She asked me if I had seen a poem in 'The Edinburgh Annual Register,' called 'Solyman' (I think): the hero's fate depends upon getting a happy man to give him the shirt from his back; his experiments in different countries she represented as very livelily described. At last, in Ireland, he meets with a happy man, and in his impatience proceeds to tear the shirt from his back, but finds he has none. In the same pleasant talk Miss Edgeworth praised the eulogy upon Mme. de Staël, in the notes in the fourth canto of 'Childe Harold,' as a beautiful specimen of Lord Byron's prose-writing. I told her it was Hobhouse. Lord Lansdowne read it aloud, and they all seemed to like it."

Byron, in the fourth canto, stanza LIV. of "Childe Harold," has some fine lines beginning, —

> "In Santa Croce's holy precincts lie
> Ashes which make it holier, dust which is
> Even in itself an immortality."

The note is a glowing tribute to the memory of Mme. de Staël. In it he says, —

"'Corinne' is no more; and with her should expire the fear, the flattery, and the envy which threw too dazzling or too dark a cloud round the march of genius, and forbade the steady gaze of disinterested criticism."

Lord and Lady Lansdowne made charming hosts. Some years after this time, Sydney Smith said of him, —

"Why don't they talk on the virtues and excellences of Lansdowne? There is no man who performs the

duties of life better, or fills a high station in a more becoming manner. He is full of knowledge, and eager for its acquisition. His remarkable politeness is the result of good-nature, regulated by good sense. He looks for talents and qualities among all ranks of men, and adds them to his stock of society, as a botanist does his plants; and, while other aristocrats are yawning among Stars and Garters, Lansdowne is refreshing his soul with the fancy and genius which he has found in odd places, and gathered to the marbles and pictures of his palace. Then he is an honest politician, a wise statesman, and has a philosophic mind: he is very agreeable in conversation, and is a man of unblemished life."

In Mr. Harness's remarks on the society, when he came upon the stage, — "a society which, taken for all in all, has never been surpassed," — he mentions, among its members, Lord Lansdowne, as "unwearied in his kindness and liberality to men of genius." Brougham said of him, that "there never was a more amiable and virtuous man in any party or any political station than Lord Lansdowne."

Lady Lansdowne was the fitting wife of such a man. Lord John Russell, in his preface to Moore's "Diaries," says, —

"I cannot properly expatiate upon the character of one whose virtues loved to retire even from the praise of loving retirement; who sought in works of charity and benevolence among her poorer neighbors a compensation for the worldly advantage which excited the envy of others: but, among the good influences which surrounded Moore, and led him to revere a woman 'unspotted from the world,' I could not omit to allude to his intercourse

with her who diffused an air of holiness and peace and purity over the house of Bowood, which neither rich nor poor can ever forget."

Moore himself said of her, —

"Had a long conversation with her, and came away (as I always do) more and more impressed with the excellent qualities of her mind and heart: even her faults are but the *selvage* of fine and sound virtues."

The place of Bowood anciently constituted part of the royal forest of Pevisham, which extended from Chippenham to Devizes: the Avon bounds it on two sides. It was bought by John, Earl of Shelburne. The present mansion was then standing, but was improved and added to in 1763. The grounds were laid out by the Earl of Shelburne, Lord Lansdowne's father, under the advice of "Capability Brown," and Mr. Hamilton of Pain's Hill. While in retirement, and his enemies were blackening his character, Lord Shelburne was buying his splendid collection of MSS., entertaining his friends, and making a lake at Bowood.

From the hospitable and elegant seat of Lord Lansdowne, Miss Edgeworth and her sister went to the Grove, Epping, the residence of Capt. Wilson, who was father-in-law to Capt. Francis Beaufort. While at Epping, Maria made a kind of pious pilgrimage to the house her friend Mr. Day had lived in: she found only a wall left of it, but that the memory of the eccentric man was cherished by his poor neighbors, to whom he had shown much kindness in his peculiar way.

From Epping the sisters went over Hampstead Heath to the village, where they were expected by Joanna and Agnes Baillie; who, "most kind, cordial, and warm-hearted, came running down their little flagged walk to welcome us. Mrs. Hunter, widow of John Hunter, dined here yesterday. She wrote 'The Son of Alnomac shall never complain,' and she entertained me exceedingly; and both Joanna and her sister have such agreeable and new conversation, — not old, trumpery literature over again, and reviews, but new circumstances, with telling *apropos* to every subject that is touched upon; frank observations on character, without either ill-nature or the fear of committing themselves: no blue-stocking tittle-tattle, or habits of worshipping or being worshipped; domestic, affectionate, good to live with, and, without fussing continually, doing what is most obliging, and whatever makes us feel most at home. Breakfast is very pleasant in this house, the two good sisters look so neat and cheerful." While on this visit they went to see Mrs. Barbauld, at her home in Stoke Newington. This was a painful visit, for it brought up old memories.

"We waited some time before she appeared; and I had the leisure to recollect every thing that could make me melancholy, — the very sofa that you recollect, where you and my father sat. I was quite *undone* before she came in, but was forced to get through it. She was gratified by our visit, and very kind and agreeable."

After this pleasant stay at the Misses Baillie, they went to Lady Spencer's at Wimbledon. Among the

distinguished guests there during their visit were Lady Jones, widow of Sir William Jones, the great Orientalist, "a thin, dried old lady, nut-cracker chin, penetrating, benevolent, often-smiling black eyes; and her nephew, young Mr. Hare, author of 'Guesses on Truth,' and Mr. Brunel."[1]

After this round of visits, the sisters returned to Bowood in November. While there they were shocked by the news of Romilly's death. There was a delightful company assembled again, Mr. and Mrs. Dugald Stewart being among the number. Moore, in speaking of a day at Bowood, says he had a talk with Lady Lansdowne, "who had read Edgeworth's 'Memoirs,' in manuscript; was much interested by them, particularly by his account of Mr. Day, the person of whom there is so much in Miss Seward's 'Memoir of Darwin.'" He was again at Bowood in November.

"Walked to Bowood a little after five. Company to dinner, — Dugald Stewart, his wife and daughters, the Misses Edgeworths and Bowleses. Very pleasant day. Sat between Lady Lansdowne and Miss Edgeworth at dinner: both in different ways very delightful. Talked with Miss Edgeworth of the Dublin Mrs. Lefanu,[2] whom she seemed to have a higher notion of altogether than I had. I asked her whether the play Mrs. Lefanu had written was not pretty good. 'Oh, no! pretty bad,' she answered. She had, however, derived her opinion of

[1] Sir Mark Isambard Brunel, born in France, 1769; died in England, 1849; distinguished engineer, — Thames Tunnel, Woolwich Arsenal, Chatham dock-yard, among his many undertakings.

[2] Wife of Rev. Joseph Lefanu; sister of Sheridan.

Mrs. Lefanu's talents from a common friend of theirs, who loved her very much.

"This friend told her that Mrs. Lefanu had seen a letter to Sheridan from one of the persons high in the American government, during the latter end of the war, expressing great admiration of his talents and political opinions, and telling him that twenty thousand pounds were deposited with a certain banker, ready for him to draw, as a mark of their value for his services in the cause of liberty. She had also seen Sheridan's answer, in which, with many gratified acknowledgments of their high opinion, he begged leave to decline a gift communicated under such circumstances. Hope this is true. Said she would get the particulars. Reminded me of the night she saw me as 'Mungo' at a masquerade at Lady Besborough's. Told her this was the last folly I had been guilty of in the masquerading way. Brought to my mind a pun I had made in her hearing that night. Lady Clare said, 'I am always found out at masquerade.' — 'That shows,' answered I, 'you are not the *clair obscure*.' Did very well from Mungo.

"Same night I sang in the evening. Stewart, I was happy to see, much delighted. When I met him at Lord Moira's, I watched him while I sang, and saw him, when I had finished, give a sort of decisive blow to the sofa which he was reclining against. This gesticulation puzzled me, and I could not tell whether it was approbation or condemnation; but I am satisfied now. I never saw any *man* that seemed to feel my singing more deeply: the tears frequently stood in his eyes. Miss Edgeworth, too, was much affected. This is a delightful triumph to touch these higher spirits!"

After delightful days spent at Bowood, they left it for Byrkeley Lodge, and there enjoyed a stay with the Sneyds; being "happy in the quiet of Byrkeley Lodge," after this succession of visits.

In January they went to Trentham, the seat of Lord Stafford; Fanny joining them at Lichfield. They returned to Byrkeley Lodge after this, and again started from there in March to visit the Moilliets, at Smethwick, near Birmingham. Mrs. Moilliet was a daughter of Mr. Edgeworth's old friend Mr. Keir.

"Mr. Moilliet told us an anecdote of Mme. la Comtesse de Rumford and her charming count: he, one day in a fit of ill-humor, went to the porter, and forbade him to let into his house any of the friends of Mme. la Comtesse or of M. Lavoisier's, — all the society which you and I saw at her house: they had been invited to supper. The old porter, all disconsolate, went to tell the countess the order he had received. 'Well, you must obey your master: you must not let them into the house; but I will go down to your lodge, and, as each carriage comes, you will let them know what has happened, and that I am there to receive them.' They all came, and, by two and three at a time, went into the porter's lodge and spent the evening with her; their carriages lining the street all night, to the count's infinite mortification."

Maria, while at Mrs. Moilliet's, visited "dear, old Mr. Watt, — eighty-four, and in perfect possession of eyes, ears, and all his comprehensive understanding, and warm heart. . . . Watt is at this moment the best encyclopedia extant."

The sisters went next to the home of Lady Elizabeth Whitbread, Grove House, at Kensington Gore. Maria found Lady Elizabeth most devoted in her attentions.

"Her house, her servants, her carriage, her horses, are not only entirely at my disposal, but she had the good-natured politeness to go down to the door to desire the coachman to have *George Bristow* always with him on the box, as the shaking would be too much for him behind the carriage."

This old man was the servant Mr. Day had at Epping, who ploughed a sandy field under his orders sixteen times to enrich it; Mr. Day having decided that was the way to cultivate poor soil. After he left Mr. Day, he went over to Mr. Edgeworth in Ireland.

While Maria was at Lady Whitbread's, she was engaged in making the business arrangements for publishing her father's memoir. Mr. Johnson was succeeded by his nephews, Messrs. Miles and Hunter: Mr. Miles soon withdrew from the firm. They were very polite and honorable in all business matters; but the whole affair was trying to Miss Edgeworth, who had always been spared any business details by her father, who arranged all the matters relating to publication for her.

During this visit at Lady Whitbread's, she met many of the friends made in her London visit of 1813. She had a breakfast at Miss Catherine Fanshawe's, and at Mrs. Marcet's. At the latter house she met Mr. Mill, the historian, and father of John Stuart Mill. She said of Mr. Mill, "He was the chief

figurante; not the least of a *figurante* though, excellent in sense and benevolence."

They were entertained by the Wilberforces, Hopes, and Lady Lansdowne; and on St. Patrick's Day they went, "by appointment, to the Duchess of Wellington."

"Nothing could be more like Kitty Pakenham: a plate of shamrocks on the table; and, as she came forward to meet me, she gave a bunch to me, pressing my hand, and saying in a low voice with her sweet smile, 'Vous en êtes digne.' She asked individually for all her Irish friends. I showed her what was said in my father's life, and by *me*, of Lord Longford, and the drawing of his likeness, and asked if his family would be pleased. She spoke very kindly: 'Would do her father's memory honor; could not but please every Pakenham.'

"She was obliging in directing her conversation to my sisters as well as myself. She said she had purposely avoided Mme. de Staël in England, not knowing how she might be received by the Bourbons, to whom the duchess was to be ambassadress. She found Mme. de Staël was well received at the Bourbon Court, and consequently she must be received at the Duke of Wellington's. She arrived, and walking up in full assembly to the duchess, with the fire of indignation flashing in her eyes: 'Eh! Mme. la Duchesse, vous ne me voulez pas donc faire ma connaissance en Angleterre?'

"'Non, madame, je ne le voulais pas.'

"'Eh! comment, madame? Pourquoi donc?'

"'C'est que je vous craignerais, madame.'

"'Vous me craignez, Mme. la Duchesse?'

"'Non, madame, je ne vous crains plus.'

"Mme. de Staël threw her arms round her: 'Ah, je vous adore!'"

At the Hopes, Maria met the "Iron Duke" himself, but curiously enough did not recognize him. After he left she was told who he was.

"He was announced in such an unintelligible manner, that I did not know what duke it was; nor did I know, till we got into the carriage, who it was, — he looks so old and wrinkled. I never should have known him from likeness to bust or picture. His manner was very agreeable, perfectly simple and dignified. He said only a few words, but listened to some literary conversation that was going on, as if he was amused, laughing once very heartily."

He was taken by her "for some old family — Uncle Duke." Mme. de Staël said of him, ambiguously, that "there never was so great a man made out of such small material."

Ten delightful days were spent by the Misses Edgeworth at the Hopes' country-seat of Deepdene.

"The valley of Dorking is so beautiful that Rasselas would not have desired to escape from that happy valley."

At this time they visited Norbury Park, the home of Mme. d'Arblay's friends Mr. and Mrs. Locke, and also saw Evelyn's country-seat, "Wootton," so well known to the readers of his Diary.

After this country visit they again made a stay at Lady Elizabeth Whitbread's, and also visited the Carrs at Hampstead. There was a good story told Maria "of Lady Breadlebane's having been left in her carriage fast asleep, and rolled into the coach-house of a hotel in Florence, and nobody

missing her for some time; and how they went to look for her, and ever so many carriages had been rolled in after hers, and how she awakened," — all of which amused her very much.

Maria and her sisters, after another little visit to the Sneyds', crossed over to Ireland; arriving at Edgeworthstown early in the summer of 1819. After her return home Miss Edgeworth continued to revise and re-write the memoir of her father, and in this work she was constantly assisted by her sisters. Fanny Edgeworth copied it for her; and by September she was able to tell a correspondent that she had two hundred and fifty pages of it in perfect order, and was not certain whether Hunter and they would manage to have it ready for Christmas or the next spring.

The "Popular Tales" were widely read on the Continent; and translated by Mme. de Roissey and another person, whose name Miss Edgeworth did not know, into the French, they had a wide circle of readers. An Italian lady, Mme. Bianca Milesi-Mojon, translated Mrs. Barbauld's "Hymns," and some of Miss Edgeworth's "Tales," into the Italian. Mr. George Ticknor names this lady, whom he met in Paris in 1837. A sketch of her life was published by Émile Souvestre in 1854.

In July Miss Edgeworth received the following friendly letter from one whom she greatly admired and loved, — Sir Walter Scott.

ABBOTSFORD, July 21, 1819.

MY DEAR MISS EDGEWORTH, — When this shall happen to reach your hands, it will be accompanied by a second

edition of Walter Scott; a *tall* copy, as collectors say, and bound in Turkey leather, garnished with all sorts of fur and frippery, not quite so well *lettered*, however, as the old and vamped original edition. In other and more intelligible phrase, the tall cornet of Hussars, whom this will introduce to you, is my eldest son, who is now just leaving me to join his regiment in Ireland. I have charged him, and he is himself sufficiently anxious, to avoid no opportunity of making your acquaintance; as to be known to the good and the wise is by far the best privilege he can derive from my connection with literature. I have always felt the value of having access to persons of talent and genius to be the best part of a literary man's prerogative; and you will not wonder, I am sure, that I should be desirous this youngster should have a share of the same benefit.

I have had dreadful bad health for many months past, and have endured more pain than I thought was consistent with life. But the thread, though frail in some respects, is tough in others; and here am I with renewed health, and a fair prospect of regaining my strength, much exhausted by such a train of suffering.

I do not know when this will reach you, my son's motions being uncertain. But find you where or when it will, it comes, dear Miss Edgeworth, from the sincere admirer of your genius, and of the patriotic and excellent manner in which it has always been exerted. In which character I subscribe myself,

Ever yours truly,

WALTER SCOTT.

CHAPTER XV.

A Visit from the Carrs. — Maria reads New Books. — Memoir completed. — A Continental Journey. — England. — Oxford. — Paris. — Old Friends re-visited. — Mme. Récamier. — Mme. de Pastoret. — Cuvier. — Prony. — Other Celebrities. — French Society. — Many Changes. — Politics. — Mme. de Rumford. — Geneva. — Dumont. — The Moilliets. — A Visit at Pregny. — Coppet. — Chamouni. — A Town on the Borders of Lake Geneva. — Visit to Mme. de Montolien. — Again at Coppet. — M. de Staël. — Memories of Mme. de Staël. — Maria writes "Rosamond" at Pregny. — M. Pictet de Rochemont. — Reviews of the "Memoir." — Painful Experience for Maria. — Paris. — Much Visiting. — A Call upon Mme. de Rochejaquelin.

In September the family had a visit from their friends the Carrs. Maria was very fond of them. Miss Carr was an intimate friend of Lady Byron, and all the Pakenhams were very much attached to her; "though she had the misfortune to refuse Sir Edward" (Pakenham), Maria wrote, when mentioning this lady.

The long and complete rest which Miss Edgeworth gave her eyes was attended with excellent results. She found she had "eyes to read again;" and the pleasure was very great, in proportion to the deprivation she had suffered in abstaining from all writing, even corresponding with her friends, which all her life was a source of great interest to her. When she first began to use them, she said, —

"I have a voracious appetite, and a relish for food, — good, bad, and indifferent, I am afraid, — like a half-famished, shipwrecked wretch."

Miss Edgeworth read "The Life of Mme. de Staël," which was written soon after her death by her cousin, Mme. Necker de Saussure, "of whom Mme. de Staël said, when some one asked, 'What sort of a woman is she?' — 'Elle a tous les talents qu'on me suppose, et tous les virtues qui me manquent.'" Miss Edgeworth thought this a "touching and beautiful" description.

Miss Berry's work, as editor of Lady Russell's "Life and Letters," which appeared at this time, pleased Maria very much; and she thought it well done.

Early in the spring of 1820, when Maria had finished her father's "Memoir," and the continuation of it, and made all necessary arrangements for its publication, she decided to take a Continental journey, with her sisters Fanny and Harriet, re-visiting Paris, and perhaps going farther south. She visited Black Castle on her way to Dublin, and left Ireland early in April. On this journey Miss Edgeworth first travelled in a steamboat; the new line having been started just before this time to ply between Dublin and Holyhead. Her description of the "*jigging*" motion, which she disliked very much, she said "was like the shake felt in a carriage when a pig is scratching himself against the hind-wheel, while waiting at an Irish inn-door." Certainly only a constant traveller in Ireland could have more aptly described the motion of a small steamboat.

On their way through England, they visited the Watts. Old Mr. Watt had recently died. Some one told her the following epitaph, which she considered worth copying: —

> "As *So* lived, so did So die.
> So, so! Did he so? So let him die."

This was caused by the premium offered by a citizen of London, of the name of *So*, who desired an epitaph on his odd name.

The party stopped at Oxford, and saw the colleges and town. There some one told Maria an anecdote of the visit of the prince regent, and the emperor of Russia. When the royal persons entered the theatre at Oxford, it was "filled in every part; but such was the hush you could have heard a pin drop, till the prince put his foot upon the threshold, when the whole assembly rose with a tremendous shout of applause. The prince was supremely gratified, and said to the emperor of Russia, 'You heard the London mob hoot me, but you see how I am received by the young gentlemen of England.'"

The party arrived at Paris the last week in April, and found many old friends delighted to welcome them. Maria found Mme. de Pastoret just the same in her cordial greeting, and "little changed" by the years that had passed since they last met. She met Humboldt, dined at Cuvier's, and went often to the Delesserts. They also renewed their acquaintance with Mme. Récamier. They went to her "at her convent, L'Abbaye aux Bois, up seventy-eight steps, — all came in with the asthma; elegant room, and

she as elegant as ever," though "no longer rich and prosperous."—"She is still beautiful," she wrote later, "still dresses herself and her little room with elegant simplicity, and lives in a convent only because it is cheap and respectable. M. Récamier is still living: they have not been separated by any thing but misfortune." This sounds curiously enough to English-speaking people, who think "misfortune" should unite a husband and wife more closely; but there was no love between Mme. Récamier and her husband.

At the house of Cuvier, Maria met many old friends, and made many new ones among the scientific men of France. Among the good friends who recalled the days of their earlier visit, she met M. Prony; "as like an honest water-dog as ever." She describes Cuvier and Prony in a graphic manner, and the good talk they had.

"Cuvier and Prony talking,—Prony, with his hair nearly in my plate, was telling me most entertaining anecdotes of Bonaparte; and Cuvier, with his head nearly meeting him, talking as hard as he could, not striving to show learning or wit, quite the contrary,—frank, open-hearted genius, delighted to be together at home.

"Both Cuvier and Prony agreed that Bonaparte never could bear to have any answer but a *decided* one. 'One day,' said Cuvier, 'I nearly ruined myself by considering before I answered. He asked me, "Faut-il introduire le sucre de betterave en France?"—"D'abord, sire, il faut songer si vos colonies"—"Faut-il avoir le sucre de betterave en France?"—"Mais, sire, il faut examiner"—"Bah! je le demanderai à Berthollet."'

"This despotic, laconic mode of insisting on learning every thing in two words had its inconvenience. One day he asked the master of the woods at Fontainebleau, 'How many acres of wood here?' The master, an honest man, stopped to recollect. 'Bah!' and the under-master came forward, and said any number that came into his head. Bonaparte immediately took the mastership from the first, and gave it to the second. 'Qu'arrivait-il?' continued Prony. 'The rogue who gave the guess-answer was soon found out cutting down and selling quantities of trees; and Bonaparte had to take the rangership from him, and re-instate the honest hesitater.'

"Prony is, you know, one of the most absent men alive. 'Once,' he told me, 'I was in a carriage with Bonaparte and Gen. Caffarelli: it was at the time he was going to Egypt. He asked me to go. I said I could not; that is, I would not. And, when I had said these words, I fell into a reverie, collecting in my own head all the reasons I could for not going to Egypt. All this time Bonaparte was going on with some confidential communication to me of his secret intentions and views; and when it was ended, *le seul mot*, *Arabie*, *m'avait frappé l'oreille. Alors je voudrais m'avoir arrachée les cheveux;* making the motion so to do, *pour pouvoir me rappeler ce qu'il venait me dire.* But I never could recall one single word or idea.' — 'Why did you not ask Caffarelli afterwards?' — 'I dared not, because I should have betrayed myself to him.'"

Prony told Miss Edgeworth, that during Bonaparte's Spanish war he employed him to make logarithms, astronomical, and nautical tables, on a magnificent scale. Prony found that to execute what was required of him would take him and all

the philosophers of France a hundred and fifty years. He was very unhappy, having to do with a despot who *would* have his will executed. When the first volume of Smith's "Wealth of Nations" fell into his hands, he opened on the division of labor, our favorite pin-making: "Ha, ha! voilà mon affaire: je ferai mes calcules comme on fait les épingles!" And he divided the labor among two hundred men, who knew no more than the simple rules of arithmetic, whom he assembled in one large building; and these men-machines worked on, and the tables were made.

Miss Edgeworth spoke French with as much ease and fluency as English; and one evening she made herself very entertaining by some remarks on peculiarities of the French language, and the use of masculine and feminine words, when a lady rather rudely exclaimed, "Elle fait des calembourgs dans notre langue."

The following remarks about the conversation at the Duchesse d'Escars's will give one an idea of the small-talk of Parisian fashionable society: —

"We have seen Mlle. Mars twice, or thrice rather, in the 'Mariage de Figaro,' and in the little pieces of 'Le Jaloux sans Amour,' and 'La Jeunesse de Henri Cinq,' and admire her exceedingly. In *petit comité* the other night at the Duchesse d'Escars's, a discussion took place between the Duchesse de la Force, Marmont, and Pozzo di Borgo, on the *bon et mauvais ton* of different expressions: *bonne société* is an expression *bourgeoise;* you may say *bonne compagnie* or *la haute société.* '*Voilà des nuances,*' as Mme. d'Escars said. Such a wonderful

jabbering as these grandees made about these small matters! It put me in mind of a conversation in 'The World" on good company, which we all used to admire."

Maria met Mme. Swetchine, the celebrated writer. She says of her, "Mme. Swetchine, a Russian, is one of the cleverest women I ever heard converse." Of another Russian, Rostopchin, she said, he declared "he would represent Russian civilization by a naked man looking at himself in a gilt-framed mirror."

Maria met Benjamin Constant at a friend's house. She said, —

"I do not like him at all: his countenance, voice, manner, and conversation are all disagreeable to me. He is a fair, *whithky*-looking man (*sic*), very near-sighted, with spectacles which seem to pinch his nose. . . . He has been well called the *héros des brochures*. We sat beside one another, and I think we felt a mutual antipathy. On the other side of me was Royer-Collard, suffering with toothache and swelled face; but, notwithstanding the distortion of the swelling, the natural expression of his countenance, and the strength and sincerity of his soul, made their way; and the frankness of his character, and the plain superiority of his talents, were manifest in five minutes' conversation."

Mme. Le Brun, who was then painting the portrait of the Princess Potemkin, pleased Maria very much by her vivacity, and animated talk about her varied experiences. "Mme. Le Brun is sixty-six, with great vivacity as well as genius, and better worth seeing than her pictures; for, though they are speaking, she speaks, and speaks uncommonly well."

Miss Edgeworth was very anxious as to the manner in which the memoir of her father would be received by her friends and the public. She was much gratified by an appreciative letter from Mrs. Ruxton, who told her how much she liked the book. She replied, —

"You can scarcely conceive the pleasure which the letter I have just received from you has given me, as I was so anxious to know what you and Sophy thought of the *published* memoirs: the irremediable words once past the press, I knew the happiness of my life was at stake. Even if all the rest of the world had praised it, and you had been dissatisfied, how miserable I should have been! Everybody, of every degree of rank and talent, who has read the 'Memoirs,' speaks of them in the most gratifying and delightful manner. Those who have fixed on individual circumstances have always fixed on those which we should have considered as most curious. Mr. Malthus, this morning, spoke most highly of it, and of its useful tendency, both in a public and private light. Much as I have dreaded having it spoken of, all I have yet heard has been what best compensated for all the anxiety I have felt."

While Miss Edgeworth was visiting at the country-house of M. de Vindé, La Celle, she worked in the early morning hours at "Rosamond;" and Mr. Hunter began at once to print it in July.

"All had so changed from what it had been when Mr. Edgeworth was banished from Paris because Bonaparte supposed him to be the Abbé Edgeworth's brother, that now being considered connections of the Abbé de Fir-

mount was a passport for Maria and her sisters to many of the houses of the *ancienne noblesse;* and they were specially invited to see a picture at Mme. de Canmont's of the Duchesse d' Angoulême attending the Abbé Edgeworth's death-bed.

"They always spoke of the Abbé Edgeworth as the Abbé de Firmount, which name he had taken because of the difficulty the French found in the *w* and *th;* Edge-*vatz* being the usual attempt at the name. At one house a valet, after Maria had several times repeated to him 'Edgeworth,' exclaimed, 'Ah! je renonce à ça,' and throwing open the door of the *salon* announced *Mme. Maria et mademoiselles ses soeurs.*"

Many were the changes observed by Maria in the society of Paris. She wrote, —

"A great change has taken place [in French society]. The men huddle together now in France as they used to do in England, talking politics, with their backs to the women, in a corner or even in the middle of the room, without minding them in the least: and the ladies complain and look disconsolate, and many ask 'if this be Paris;' and others scream *Ultra* nonsense or *Liberal* nonsense, to make themselves of consequence, and to attract the attention of the gentlemen."

When Miss Edgeworth visited Paris, in 1803, with her father, she especially remarked on the absence of scandal, and the freedom from political questions, which distinguished the tone of conversation. This was before she was aware of the entire suppression of thought and the espionage of the government. On her return to Paris, in 1820, she

was greatly struck with the change in social affairs. Party spirit ran high; and the verb *politiquer*, "to talk politics," had been coined to meet the needs of the day. In 1803 all were glad to find themselves safely among their friends and in their old homes. The recent horrors of the Revolution had subdued and softened the natural levity of the people. The aristocratic dwellers in the Faubourg St. Germain had learned that they were human, and could meet on terms of comparative civility the new nobles of Napoleon, raised from the very dregs of the people, — from common soldiers perhaps, who each carried, as Napier said not long after, "a marshal's baton in his knapsack." The autocratic rule of Napoleon subdued the spirits and suppressed the tongues of the opponents of his government. This gave literature and science the greater opportunity to assert their sway and manifest their charms. Now all was different. The Liberal or Constitutional party was divided from the Ultras by a strong line of demarkation: the society of the two parties was almost entirely distinct. There were a few favored individuals whom one met at the *salons* of both the returned *Émigrés*, and in the houses of the Constitutionals. These inventors of imaginary constitutions delighted to call themselves by this name, but the Bourbons contemptuously named them the "Liberals."

Maria was often much interested in hearing in the same evening the very opposite opinions expressed by the adherents of these parties; as she frequently visited a *salon* of some lady of the *ancien régime*,

and then went among the "Liberals" for a while before returning home. Her sympathies were not enlisted on either side; but she found much to attract and please her in the variety of thought, the interchange of experience, and the novelty of the views she heard. The old aristocracy were charmed with the culture of Miss Edgeworth, and her knowledge of old French classical literature; and this opened the way for long and agreeable conversations on the earlier days of their lives. Many a strange and romantic adventure, many of the terrible events of the early days of the French Revolution, were told her by those who had actually played a part in those dreadful scenes.

The ready sympathy and genuine interest which Miss Edgeworth always showed in conversation, her excellent powers as a good listener, made one of the special charms of her friendship. Those who were struck at first by her wit, ready humor, and genius, were always impressed with the fact that she was as good a listener as a talker. Among the scientific men who had been employed and patronized by Napoleon I., Maria found many friends; for she had a strong admiration for the genius of the emperor, and had hardly seen enough of the corruption of his government to realize the state of affairs which his usurpation had entailed on France. She expressed herself *si nettement*, as one of his adherents said, that the men who still clung to his memory and admired his capacity for rule enjoyed telling her of their affairs, as Prony did in describing his method of making calculations to order.

Miss Edgeworth saw all sides of the social life of Paris, and many years after she referred to her own experiences in writing her story of "Helen." She alludes thus to the sad changes then existing in the society of Paris: —

"'Lady Davenant,' turning to a French gentleman, spoke of the alterations she had observed when she was last at Paris, from the overwhelming violence of party spirit on all sides. 'Dreadfully true,' the French gentleman replied: 'party spirit, taking every Protean form, calling itself by a hundred names, and with a thousand devices and watchwords, which would be too ridiculous if they were not too terrible; domestic happiness displaced; all society disordered, disorganized; literature not able to support herself, scarcely appearing in company, — all precluded, superseded, by the politics of the day.

"Lady Davenant joined with him in his regrets, and added that she feared society in England would soon be brought to the same condition.

"'No,' said the French gentleman, 'English ladies will never be so vehement as my countrywomen: they will never become, I hope, like some of our lady politicians, "qui hurlent comme les démons."'

"Lady Cecilia said, that, from what she had seen at Paris, she was persuaded, that, if the ladies did bawl too loud, it was because the gentlemen did not listen to them; that above half the party-violence which appeared in the Parisian belles was merely dramatic, to produce a sensation, and draw the gentlemen from the black "*pelotons*" in which they gathered, back to their proper positions round the *fauteuils* of the fair ladies."

The Emigrants spoke of the Liberals with the bitterest detestation, as revolutionary monsters. The Liberals spoke of Ultras as bigoted idiots; as one of them said of a lady, celebrated in 1803 as a wit and brilliant converser, "Autrefois elle avait de l'esprit, — mais elle est devenu Ultra, dévote et bête."

Before leaving Paris the sisters paid one visit which amused them. They "received a note from Mme. Lavoisier, — Mme. de Rumford I mean, — telling us that she had just arrived in Paris, and warmly begging to see us. Rejoiced was I that my sisters should have this glimpse of her, and off we drove to her; but I must own that we were disappointed in this visit, for there was a sort of *chuffiness*, and a sawdust kind of unconnected cut-shortness, in her manner, which we could not like. She was almost in the dark, with one ballooned lamp, and a semi-circle of black men round her sofa, on which she sat cushioned up for conversation; and a very odd course she gave to it, — on some wife's separation from her husband, and she took the wife's part, and went on for a long time in a shrill voice, proving that where a husband and wife detested each other, they should separate, and asserting that it must always be the man's fault when it comes to this pass. She ordered another lamp, that the gentlemen might, as she said, see my sisters' pretty faces; and the light came in time to see the smiles of the gentlemen at her matrimonial maxims." They went again, and found her "very agreeable" on that occasion.

Among other friends whom they met in Paris was

Tom Moore, who was living in the Champs Elysiens. He received a note from Miss Edgeworth, asking him to call upon her; and a few days later she invited him to join a party to the Marquis d' Osmonds at Chateray. He tells a story of the husband of one of Maria's sisters. He wanted to ask for "pump-water," and looked in the dictionary for "pump," and, finding "*escarpin*" (which means a light shoe), asked for "*escarpin eau.*"

Miss Edgeworth had long promised herself and the Moilliets that she would visit them at Geneva, and therefore the sisters left Paris late in July for Switzerland.

Maria's first impressions of Mont Blanc, she said, "will remain an era in my life, — a new idea, a new feeling standing alone in my mind."

They made an excursion to Chamouni, in company with several friends. Dumont was with them constantly during their stay in Switzerland; and M. Pictet, Maria found "as kind, as active, and as warm-hearted as ever." At Chamouni they met Arago, the noted astronomer. At a delightful dinner at Mrs. Marcet's, Miss Edgeworth met M. Dumont, M. and Mme. Prévost, M. de la Rive, M. Bonstetten, M. de Candolle, the noted botanist, "a particularly agreeable man."

Miss Edgeworth enjoyed much the renewal of her intimacy with M. Dumont. She found him "very kind and cordial: he seems to enjoy universal consideration here; and he loves Mont Blanc, next to Bentham, above all created things."

"He speaks in the kindest, most tender and affectionate manner of our 'Memoirs:' he says he hears from England, and from all who have read them, that they have produced the effect we wished and hoped. The manuscript had interested him, he said, so deeply, that with all his efforts he could not put himself in the place of the indifferent public."

This period of social life in Geneva has been called the "Augustan age" of that city by those who knew its attractions well. An unusual number of eminent scientific and literary people formed its society, and a generous and unostentatious hospitality was characteristic of its inhabitants. There were charming re-unions in the summer evenings, by moonlight, on lawns sloping to the banks of the lake; and other entertainments in the old city itself gave a constant variety to the days passed there. The drives also were charming; and after an early morning excursion from Pregny, the home of the Moilliets, they found themselves for the first time at Coppet, made classic ground by the memory of Mme. de Staël, then, alas! no more. Maria wrote, —

"All the rooms inhabited by Mme. de Staël, we could not think of as common rooms: they have a classical power over the mind; and this was heightened by the strong attachment and respect for her memory shown in every word and look, and *silence*, by her son, and her friend Miss Randall. He is correcting for the press 'Les Dix Années d'Exil.' M. de Staël, after breakfast, took us a delightful walk through the grounds, which he is improving with good taste and judgment. He told me

that his mother never gave any work to the public in the form in which she originally composed it: she changed the arrangement and expression of her thoughts with such facility, and was so little attached to her own first views of the subject, that often a work was completely remodelled by her while passing through the press. Her father disliked to see her make any formal preparations for writing when she was young; so that she used often to write on the corner of the chimney-piece, or on a pasteboard held in her hand, and always in the room with others, for her father could not bear her to be out of the room: and this habit of writing without preparation she preserved ever afterwards. M. de Staël told me of a curious interview he had with Bonaparte when he was enraged with his mother, who had published remarks on his government, concluding with 'Eh bien! vous avez raison ainsi je conçois, qu'un fils doit toujours faire la défense de sa mère; mais enfin, si monsieur veut écrire des libelles, il faut aller en Angleterre. Ou bien, s'il cherche la gloire, c'est en Angleterre qu'il faut aller. C'est Angleterre ou la France — il n'y a que ces deux pays en Europe — dans le monde!' . . .

"M. de Staël called his little brother, Alphonse Rocca, to introduce him to us: he is a pleasing, gentle-looking, ivory-pale boy, with dark-blue eyes, not the least like Mme. de Staël. M. de Staël speaks English perfectly, and with the air of an English man of fashion."

After the delightful trip to Chamouni, a tour round the Lake of Geneva was proposed and made by the sisters, accompanied by M. Dumont. They travelled "in one of the carriages of the country, a mixture of a sociable and an Irish *jingle*, with some resemblance to a hearse." While at Lausanne

the party made a visit, Sept. 15, to the author of a once famous novel. Maria described their difficulties in an amusing letter: —

"Our first object this morning was to see Mme. de Montolieu, the author of 'Caroline de Lichfeld,' to whom I had a letter of introduction. She was not at Lausanne, we were told, but at her country-house, Bussigny, about a league and a half from the town. We had a delicious, fine morning; and through romantic lanes, and up and down hills, till we found ourselves in the midst of a ploughed field, when the coachman's pride of ignorance had to give up, and he had to beg his way to Bussigny, a village of scattered Swiss cottages high upon rocks, with far-spreading prospect below. In the court of the house which we were told was Mme. de Montolieu's, we saw a lady, of a tall, upright, active-looking figure, with much the appearance of a gentlewoman; but we could not think that this was Mme. de Montolieu, because for the last half-hour Dumont, impatient at our losing our way, had been saying she must be too old to receive us. 'She was very old thirty years ago: she must be *quatre-vingt*, at least;' at last it came to '*quatre-vingt-dix*.' This lady did not look above fifty. She came to the carriage as it stopped, and asked whom we wished to see. The moment I saw her eyes, I knew it was Mme. de Montolieu; and, stooping down from the open carriage, I put into her hand the letter of introduction and our card. She never opened the note; but the instant her eye had glanced upon the card, she repeated the name with a voice of joyful welcome. I jumped out of the carriage; and she embraced me so cordially, and received my sisters so kindly, and M. Dumont so politely, that we were all at ease and acquainted and delighted

before we were half-way up-stairs. While she went into the ante-chamber for a basket of peaches, I had time to look at the prints hung in the little drawing-room: they had struck me the moment we came in as scenes from 'Caroline de Lichfeld;' indifferent, old-fashioned, provoking figures, — Caroline and Count Walstein in the fashions of thirty years ago.

"When Mme. de Montolieu returned, she bade me not to look at them; 'but I will tell you how they came to be here.' They had been given to her by Gibbon: he was the person who *published* 'Caroline de Lichfeld.' She had written it for the entertainment of an aunt who was ill: a German story of three or four pages gave her the first idea of it. 'I never could invent: give me a hint, and I can go on and supply the details and the characters.' Just when 'Caroline de Lichfeld' was finished, Gibbon became acquainted with her aunt, who showed it to him: he seized upon the manuscript, and said it must be published. It ran in four months through several editions; and just when it was in its first vogue, Gibbon happened to be in London, saw those prints, and brought them over to her, telling her that he had brought her a present of prints from London, but that he would only give them to her on condition that she would promise to hang them, and let them always hang, in her drawing-room. After many vain efforts to find out what manner of things they were, Gibbon and curiosity prevailed: she promised, and there they hang.

"She must have been a beautiful woman. She told me she is seventy; fine, dark, enthusiastic eyes, a quickly varying countenance, full of life, and with all the warmth of heart and imagination which is thought to belong only to youth. Very sorry to part with her."

This lady had an immense reputation at one time in England: Miss Anna Seward wrote to Miss Powys of the Abbey in 1786: —

"The ingenious French lady to whom we are indebted for 'Caroline de Lichfeld' has found a competency and a husband through its pages. A rich widower of fifty-three, on the confines of Germany, respectable in rank and character, whose children are married, and settled at a distance from him, read that novel and felt its exact sense. Personally unknown to the author, he inquired into her situation, and found her merits acknowledged, and her reputation spotless. He has married her. The instance is rare: Hymen passing by the fane of Cytherea and Plutus' shrine to light his torch at the altar of Genius."

She also described the book to another friend: "The most charming novel I have read these many years, 'Caroline de Lichfeld,' formed part of our amusement at Calwich. It is unique of its kind, resembling no other novel."

A pleasant visit was made to the Marcets at Maligny; and then Maria wrote from the Château de Coppet, Sept. 28, 8 A.M.

"We came here yesterday; and here we are in the very apartments occupied by M. Necker, opening into what is now the library, but what was once that theatre on which Mme. de Staël used to act her own 'Corinne.' Yesterday evening, when Mme. de Broglie had placed me next the oldest friend of the family, M. de Bonstettin, he whispered to me 'You are now in the exact spot, in the very chair, where Mme. de Staël used to sit.' Her friends were excessively attached to her. This old man talked of her

with tears in his eyes, and with all the sudden changes of countenance, and twitchings of the muscles, which mark strong uncontrollable feelings.

"There is something inexpressibly melancholy, awful, in this house, in these rooms, where the thought continually recurs: here Genius *was;* here was Ambition, Love! all the great struggles of the passions, — here was Mme. de Staël! The respect paid to her memory by her son and daughter and by M. de Broglie is touching. The little Rocca, seven years old, is an odd, cold, prudent old-man sort of child, as unlike as possible to the son you would have expected from such parents. M. Rocca, brother to the boy's father, is here — handsome, but I know no more. M. Sismondi and his wife dined here, etc.

"M. de Staël has promised to show to me Gibbon's letters to his grandmother, ending regularly with, 'Je suis, mademoiselle, avec les sentimens qui font le desespoir de ma vie.'"

With M. de Staël and Mme. de Broglie, Maria was particularly happy. It had been reported that Mme. de Staël had said of Maria's writings "Que Miss Edgeworth était digne de l'enthousiasme, mais qu'elle s'est perdue dans la triste utilité." — "Ma mère n'a jamais dit ça." Mme. de Broglie indignantly declared, "elle était incapable!" She saw the enthusiastic admiration Maria expressed for her mother's genius, and felt it was not true that Maria wanted enthusiasm. Yet it is likely Mme. de Staël did say this: it sounds like her rhetorical declamation when, excited in conversation, she often generalized in a sweeping manner.

Maria heard with pleasure "the most gratifying

terms of praise of" her father's life from M. de Staël and Miss Randall. M. Dumont had many anecdotes of Mme. de Staël's early life to tell Maria. He told her that "one day M. Suard, as he entered the *salon* of the Hotel Necker, saw Mme. Necker going out of the room, and Mlle. Necker standing in a melancholy attitude with tears in her eyes. Guessing that Mme. Necker had been lecturing her, Suard went towards her to comfort her, and whispered 'Une caresse du papa dédommagera bien de tout ça.' She immediately, wiping the tears from her eyes, answered 'Eh! oui, monsieur, mon père songe à mon bonheur présent, mamma songe à mon avenir.' There was more than presence of mind, there was heart and soul, and greatness of mind, in this answer," says Miss Edgeworth in conclusion.

While "Rosamond" was being printed, Mr. Hunter found that there was not enough manuscript to complete two volumes: so Maria instantly set to work while at Pregny, in October; and though in the midst of distractions, social and friendly, of her friends the Moilliets' house, she completed the volume by writing, with her usual ease and spirit, "The Bracelet of Memory" and "Blind Kate."

"Pregny was a beautiful place, commanding superb views of the lake and Mont Blanc." It was as interesting in its history as it was beautiful: it had been the property of the Empress Josephine. It was a fine, large house; and here Maria and her sisters enjoyed all the advantages of a second home. They had three large rooms, besides another joining the drawing-room, where Maria usually wrote in the mornings.

M. Pictet de Rochemont, brother of the Edgeworths' old friend Marc Auguste Pictet, took much interest in Miss Edgeworth's "Life of her Father," and with great care translated the best passages from it, for the "Biblothèque Universelle." They visited him at his house, and were there introduced to Mme. Necker de Saussure, the author of a work on "Progressive Education." Miss Edgeworth, who thought this book dull and tedious, found the author of it much more agreeable than her writings.

M. Dumont once, in speaking of this lady, who wrote the life of her gifted cousin, Mme. de Staël, said, —

"She never comprehended her cousin: after the most glorious burst of Mme. de Staël's enthusiasm, Mme. Necker de Saussure would come with her compasses, and she would go so far, and so far, and no farther," — opening his fingers, suiting the action to the words, and moving his finger and thumb like a pair of compasses as he spoke.

M. Dumont, who was proud of his country, and loved its beautiful and magnificent scenery, always "cheerful, witty, and wise," made a charming companion; and they enjoyed his society extremely.

The last of October the sisters left the hospitable house of the Moilliets, and made their way towards Paris. On their journey they stopped at Lyons, associated in their minds with the scenes of their father's early life, and the months he passed there in arranging the work on the river. They arrived at Paris the 27th of October, and took lodgings in the Rue Ste. Honore.

A painful experience awaited Miss Edgeworth. "The Quarterly Review" made a most offensive attack upon the "Memoir" of Mr. Edgeworth. It ridiculed the anecdotes, questioned the facts, and, in fact, showed the acrimonious spirit of personal spite, instead of the dispassionate survey of a literary work, which is usually supposed to be the proper mission of a review. Hazlitt said once, sarcastically, of this "Review," —

"Mr. Croker is understood to contribute the St. Helena articles and the liberality; Mr. Canning, the practical good sense; Mr. D'Israeli, the good nature; Mr. Jacob, the modesty; Mr. Southey, the consistency; and the editor himself (Gifford), the chivalrous spirit, and the attacks on Lady Morgan."

Miss Edgeworth herself did not feel this ungenerous attack as strongly as her friends felt it for her. She wrote to her aunt, "Never lose another night's sleep, or another moment's thought, on 'The Quarterly Review.' I have never read, and never will read it." Some days after this she wrote again: —

"You would scarcely believe, my dear friends, the calm of mind, and the sort of satisfied resignation, I feel as to my father's 'Life.' I suppose the two years of doubt and extreme anxiety that I felt exhausted all my power of doubting. I know that I have done my very best; I know that I have done my duty; and I firmly believe, that, if my dear father could see the whole, he would be satisfied with what I have done."

The article in "The Quarterly" was the most abusive and ill-natured piece of personality imagin-

able. After impugning the most simple motives of Mr. Edgeworth's account of himself; stating that many of his anecdotes are false; criticising his relations with his family, his four marriages, to which the reviewer tries to add a fifth, — in short, making out of the *bonhomie* and the harmless egotisms of Mr. Edgeworth the most frightful insinuations against his moral character, — the article lays great stress on the fact, that Mr. Edgeworth was not a Christian, and considers his daughter as sadly wanting in refinement, and in appreciation of her father's shortcomings as a man and a Christian. It is hard to say what the reviewer considered Christianity; for Mr. Edgeworth was a regular attendant at the Episcopal Church in Edgeworthstown, took a friendly interest in its clergymen, and made himself agreeable to the ministers of other denominations who might be there for religious purposes; often entertaining them, as well as the Roman-Catholic parish priest, at his own table. He married, with the full consent and approbation of her father, the daughter of one clergyman of the Church of England, and the sister of another as his fourth wife, Miss Beaufort. He counted among his intimate friends several dignitaries of the Church, including the Primate of Ireland and Bishop Foster. In concluding the article, the reviewer says, —

"We have now done our painful task; and, on the whole, our greatest objection to the work is, that it must lower Mr. Edgeworth's reputation, and not raise that of his daughter. There is much to blame, and little to

praise, in what they, with a mistaken and self-deceptive partiality, record of him. His own share of the work is silly, trivial, vain, and inaccurate; hers, by its own pompous claims to approbation, fails of what a more modest exposition would have obtained, and might have been entitled to. Mr. Edgeworth had some ingenuity, great liveliness, great activity, a large share of good sense (particularly when he wrote), of good nature, and of good temper. He was a prudent and just landlord, a kind husband (except to his second wife), an affectionate parent; but he was superficial, not well founded in any branch of knowledge, yet dabbling in all. As a mechanic, he showed no originality, but some powers of application; as a public man, he was hasty, injudicious, inconsistent, and *only not* mischievous; in society we must, notwithstanding Miss Edgeworth's dutiful partiality, venture to say that he was as disagreeable as loquacity, egotism, and a little tinge now and then of indelicacy, could make him; but, with all these drawbacks, his life was, as far as we have heard or seen, on the whole, more useful, more respectable, than the representation which is here given of it. For his reputation, these two volumes of biography ought to be forgotten."

She received the following kindly and sympathetic words from two Geneva friends at this time: —

GENÈVE, Nov. 7, 1820.

"Je ne sais, mon amiable ami, si je devais vous écrire au moment ou j'ai le cœur blessé de cette attaque calomnieuse de 'Quarterly Review.' J'ai eu regret de n'être pas auprès de vous lorsqu'il a paru. Je vous aurai aidé peut-être a envisager avec plus de fermeté une agression qui doit faire plus de tort à ses auteurs qu'à vous, et je ne

crains qu'après la première expression de chagrin, dès que vous aurez le loisir de la réflexion, vous sentirez que tous ce qui respecte l'honneur, la décence, le sentiment filial, partageront votre indignation. Si par hazard vous n'avez pas lu cette infame article je vous conseillerais de ne pas le lire, et de l'abandonner au mépris public."

This letter shows the generous sympathy of Dumont on this occasion.

Mrs. Marcet, who was just setting out for Italy, wrote to Miss Edgeworth: —

"I cannot make up my mind, my dear friend, to take my departure for a still more distant country without again bidding you adieu. I have hesitated for some time past: 'Shall I, or shall I not, write to Miss Edgeworth?' for I felt that I could not write without touching on an article in the 'Quarterly;' a subject which makes my blood boil with indignation, and which rouses every feeling of contempt and abhorrence. I might, indeed, refrain from the expression of these sentiments; but how could I restrain all those feelings of the warmest interest, the tenderest sympathy, and the softest pity, for your wounded feelings? I well remember the wish you one day so piously expressed to me, that your father could look down from heaven, and see the purity and zeal of your intentions in writing his memoirs. I am sure your HEAVENLY FATHER does see them; and I feel that this unjust, unchristian, inquisitorial attack will not only develop fresh sentiments of the tenderest nature in your friends, but also rally every human being of sound sense around you."

"The Edinburgh Review," in commenting on the "Memoir" of Mr. Edgeworth, said that the most

remarkable thing about the work was, that the first was, on the whole, better than the second.

"It is very lively, rapid, and various, enlivened with a great number of anecdotes and characters; and if not indicating any extraordinary reach of thought, or loftiness of feeling, exhibiting, in rather a pleasing and candid way, the history of a very active and cultivated mind, and scattering about everywhere the indications of a good-humored complacency, and a light-hearted and indulgent gayety. The other is too solemn and didactic; and, though there are many passages full of interest and instruction, it overflows so much with praise and gratitude, and duty and self-denial, as to go near being dull and tedious."

"The North American Review," in summing up a notice of the book, said Mr. Edgeworth's "Memoir" belonged neither to the style of the Confessions of St. Augustine nor those of Rousseau.

The sisters visited much during their second stay in Paris, and saw their friends the Delesserts, and others, constantly. They had a "splendid and most agreeable dinner," given them by Mme. de Rumford. This lady, who was the widow of the celebrated chemist, Lavoisier, was again a widow, after years of separation from her second husband, the eccentric man of science, Count Rumford, with whom she lived most unhappily.

They visited the celebrated Mme.[1] de la Rochejaquelin.

[1] Widow of Henri de la Rochejaquelin, famous for his actions in La Vendée.

"She had just arrived from the country; and we found ourselves in a large hotel, in which all the winds of heaven were blowing, and in which, as we went up-stairs and crossed the ante-chambers, all was darkness, except one candle, which the servant carried before us. In a small bedroom, well furnished, with a fire just lighted, we found Mme. de Rochejaquelin lying on a sofa, her two daughters at work, one spinning with a distaff, and the other embroidering muslin. Madame is a large, fat woman, with a broad, fair face, with a most open, benevolent expression, — as benevolent as Molly Bristow's or as Mrs. Brinkley's. Her hair cut short, and perfectly gray, as seen under her cap; the rest of her face much too young for such gray locks, not at all the hard, weather-beaten look that had been described to us; and though her face and bundled form and dress, all *squashed* on a sofa, did not at first promise much of gentility, you could not hear her speak or see her for three minutes without perceiving that she was well born and well bred. She had hurt her leg, which was the cause of her lying on the sofa. It seemed a grievous penance, as she is of as active a temper as ever. She says her health is perfect, but a nervous disease in her eyes has nearly deprived her of sight: she could hardly see my face, though I sat as close as I could go to the sofa.

"'I am always very sorry,' said she, 'when any stranger sees me, parce-que je sais que je détruis toute illusion. Je sais que je devrais avoir l'air d'une héroine, et surtout que je devrais avoir l'air malheureuse, ou épuisé au moins — rein de tout cela, hélas!'

"She is much better than a heroine, — she is benevolence and truth itself. She begged her daughters to take us into the *salon*, to show us what she thought would interest us. She apologized for the cold of these rooms,

and well she might: when the double-doors were opened, I really thought Eolus himself was puffing in our faces; we shawled ourselves well before we ventured in. At one end of the *salon* is a picture of M. de Lescure, and at the other of Henri de la Rochejaquelin, by Gérard and Girodet, presents from the king. Fine military figures. In the *boudoir* is one of M. de la Rochejaquelin, much the finest of all: she has never yet looked at this picture. Far from being disappointed, I was much gratified with this visit."

Miss Edgeworth was much disappointed in seeing Talleyrand, and heard nothing but the merest commonplaces from him. He appeared determined to avoid her, though they met frequently in large assemblages.

During these two visits in Paris, Miss Edgeworth met several persons who desired the privilege of translating her works. Among these was a Mlle. Swinton, afterwards Mme. Belloc, an Irishwoman by descent, but Parisian by birth and education. At this time she was a very young lady, and she interested Miss Edgeworth very much. They corresponded for many years after this. She made excellent translations of Miss Edgeworth's books, and was her life-long friend and admirer.

CHAPTER XVI.

Return to England. — Bowood. — Ireland. — Improvements in Edgeworthstown. — England in 1821. — Visits to Smethwick Grove. — Wycombe Abbey. — Mr. Wilberforce. — Gatcombe Park. — Anecdotes. — Easton Grey. — Bowood. — Salisbury Cathedral. — Deepdene. — Sequel to "Frank." — Hampstead. — "The Pirate" read. — Misses Baillie. — Mrs. Somerville. — Many Literary People. — Anecdotes. — Mrs. Fry's Reading at Newgate. — Almacks. — Sir Walter Scott invites Maria to Abbotsford. — She accepted for a Few Months Later. — London Society. — Mrs. Siddons's Acting. — Ireland. — "Harry and Lucy." — A Visit to Scotland. — The Stuarts. — Edinburgh. — Mrs. Fletcher's Description of Maria. — Scott.

After several months on the Continent, passed very agreeably among friends and in the gay *salons* of Paris, the scientific and hospitable homes of Switzerland, and surrounded by its magnificent scenery, the Misses Edgeworth returned to England in December, 1820, by the way of Calais. They made no stay in London; simply waiting long enough to see Mr. Hunter about the printing of "Rosamond," then in the press, and to arrange about the second edition of the "Memoirs," which had been corrected, and was also being printed at this time.

They went for a little visit to Bowood, after a week at Clifton with Mrs. Beddoes. Miss Edgeworth gave a glimpse of the life at the pleasant home of the Lansdownes, saying, —

"At Bowood there was a happy mixture of sense and nonsense. Lord Lansdowne was talking to me on the nice little sofa by the fire, seriously, of Windham's life and death, and of a journal which he wrote to cure himself of indecision of character. Enter suddenly, with a great burst of noise, from the breakfast-room, a troop of gentlemen, neighing like horses. You never saw a man look more surprised than Lord Lansdowne.

"Re-enter the same performers on all-fours, grunting like pigs.

"Then a company of ladies and gentlemen in dumb show, doing a country-visit, ending with asking for a frank, courtesying, bowing and exit, — *neighbor*.

"Then enter all the gentlemen, some with their fingers on their eyes, some delighted with themselves, — *I*.

"Then re-enter Lord Lansdowne, the two Mr. Smiths, Mr. Hallam, and Fazakerley, each with little dolls made of their pocket-handkerchiefs, nursing and playing with them, — *doll*.

"Exit and re-enter, carrying and surrounding and worshipping Mrs. Ord, — *idol*. This does not do for sober reading, but it produced much laughter."

They left Bowood, and proceeded to Ireland. On their arrival in Dublin, Miss Edgeworth had a severe illness, and was detained by it for a while. After her recovery she visited her aunt, Mrs. Ruxton, at Black Castle.

The Jewish lady, Miss Mordecai of Richmond, Va., wrote Miss Edgeworth a letter about the memoir, which Maria said was "written in a spirit of Christian charity and kindness which it were to be wished that all Christians possessed," and the letter pleased her very much.

Miss Edgeworth wrote when she heard of the death of Napoleon I.: —

"So Bonaparte is dead! And no change will be made in any country by the death of a man who once made such a figure in the world. He who commanded empires and sovereigns, a prisoner in an obscure island, disputing for a bottle of wine, subject to the petty tyranny of Sir Hudson Lowe. I regret that England permitted that trampling on the fallen. What an excellent dialogue of the dead might be written between Bonaparte and Themistocles!"

She read "The Spy" during the summer, and speaks of the "new scenes and characters, humor and pathos; a picture of America in Washington's time, a surgeon worthy of Smollett or Moore, quite different from any of their various surgeons; and an Irishwoman, Betty Flanagan, incomparable."

Miss Edgeworth was always much interested in the poor of Edgeworthstown, and in endeavoring to ameliorate their condition. She asked a friend in writing of her summer's work, —

"What do you think is my employment out of doors, and what it has been this week past? My garden? No such elegant thing: but making a gutter, a sewer, and a pathway, in the street of Edgeworthstown; and I do declare I am as much interested about it as I ever was in writing any thing in my life. We have never here yet found it necessary to have recourse to public contributions for the poor; but it is necessary to give some assistance to the laboring class, and I find that making the said gutter and pathway will employ twenty men for three

weeks. . . . Did you ever hear these two excellent Tory lines made by a celebrated Whig —

> 'As bees alighting upon flowerets cease to hum,
> So, settling upon places, Whigs grow dumb'?"

Many of Miss Edgeworth's friends in England had urged her to revisit them during this year, and she determined to pass the winter of 1821–22 there. She started in October, accompanied by her two half-sisters, Fanny and Harriet, who had been with her on the Continent. Their first visit was at Smethwick Grove, the home of the Moilliets. There they "missed by not arriving last night," Maria wrote, "a Frenchman who has been seventeen years learning to play on the flute, and cannot play; and who has been ten years learning to speak English, and yet told Mrs. Moilliet that he had a letter to Lord *Porcelain*, to whom his mother is related, meaning the Duke of Portland. He left this, determined to see the residence of 'Lord Malbrouke,' and would not be persuaded that the Duke of Marlborough was not called 'Va-t-en Malbrouke.'"

After some days with the Moilliets, they went to Wycombe Abbey, the home of Lord Carrington. Among other distinguished and agreeable people Miss Edgeworth met there, she renewed her acquaintance with Mr. Wilberforce. She wrote: —

"We have had Mr. Wilberforce for several days; and I cannot tell you how glad I am to have seen him again, and to have had an opportunity of hearing his delightful conversation, and of seeing the extent and variety of his

abilities. He is not at all anxious to show himself off: he converses, he does not merely talk. His thoughts flow in such abundance, and from so many sources, that they often cross one another; and sometimes a reporter would be quite at a loss. As he literally seems to speak all his thoughts as they occur, he produces what strikes him on both sides of any question. This often puzzles his hearers, but to me it is a proof of candor and sincerity; and it is both amusing and instructive to see him thus balancing accounts aloud. He is very lively and full of odd contortions: no matter. His indulgent, benevolent temper strikes me particularly: he makes no pretension to superior sanctity or strictness. He spoke with much respect and tenderness for my feelings, of my father, and of the 'Life.'"

"We are reading Mme. de Staël's 'Dix Années d'Exil' with delight. With its faults there are so many brilliant passages, and things which no one but herself could have thought or said; and it will last as long as the memory of Bonaparte lasts on earth."

She was told in connection with some conversation in this book, that the Swedish ambassador said Mme. de Staël's letters were intercepted, and it was found she was intriguing to set Bernadotte on the throne of France. This, alleged as the cause of Napoleon's enmity to her, Miss Edgeworth was not willing to believe.

Their stay at Lord Carrington's was delightful. He gave them a lovely suite of rooms, including a private sitting-room for Miss Edgeworth's own use. After their very agreeable stay at Wycombe Abbey, they went to Gatcombe Park, the residence of Mr.

David Ricardo, the eminent writer on political economy and kindred subjects. In this charming family they enjoyed some days, which were pleasantly varied by the beautiful drives, and interesting talks with Mr. Ricardo of whom Maria wrote: —

"Mr. Ricardo, with a very composed manner, has a continual life of mind, and starts perpetually new game in conversation. I never argued or discussed a question with any person who argues more fairly, or less for victory, and more for truth. He gives full weight to every argument brought against him, and seems not to be on any side of the question for one instant longer than the conviction of his mind on that side. It seems quite indifferent to him whether you find the truth, or whether he finds it, provided it be found."

They met a Miss Strackey here at dinner. She told Maria she was at school with the young ladies who wrote to her about the wedding-dresses in the "Contrast," and well remembered their delight at her entertaining answer.

At this same dinner an English bull was mentioned. Lord Camden put the following advertisement in the papers: —

"Owing to the distress of the times Lord Camden will not shoot himself or any of his tenants before the 4th of October next."

Writing from Easton Grey, where they went after leaving Gatcombe Park, Miss Edgeworth said, Lady Catherine Bisset, "when no one was seeing or hearing, laid her hand on my arm most affectionately,

and looking up in my face said, 'Do you know, I have been half my life trying to be your good French governess. I love her."

They went next to Bowood, where they had the pleasure of hearing Lord and Lady Lansdowne's account of their foreign tour, from which they had just returned. After a visit to the Kings at Clifton, they went to Cirencester, the seat of Lord Bathurst, of whom Pope wrote, "Who plants like Bathurst?" Maria admired the beautiful and celebrated woods, and noticed "the meeting of the pine avenues in a star" as "superb." At Cirencester, Lord Apsley lent her "Valoe," a book published in 1817, by a French governess dismissed by the Duchess of Beaufort. This book "threw all high-bred London into confusion" when it appeared. There was "no wit, but tittle-tattle truths" in it. "You can't buy the book if you were to give your eyes for it: all bought up" by the Duchess of Beaufort.

Among other places of interest visited as they passed from one hospitable mansion to another, they saw Salisbury and its lovely cathedral, Stonehenge; Wilton House, with its magnificent collections of antiquities, and its priceless Vandykes; and "Longford Castle, the strongest castle in the world."

They went to Deepdene, to their friends the Hopes. Among the party gathered there, they met one of the authors of "Rejected Addresses," Mr. Smith; who told Fanny Edgeworth that he intended to put her sister "into the 'Rejected Addresses' in the character of an Irish laborer, but it was so flat he threw it aside." While at Deepdene Miss Edge-

worth wrote the preface to the sequel of "Frank," which was soon to be published.

While at the Carrs' house at Hampstead, they "read 'The Pirate,' or rather heard it read by Mr. Carr, who read admirably."

"Wonderful genius! who can raise an interest even on the barren rocks of Zetland. Aladdin could only raise palaces at will; but the mighty master, Scott, can transport us to the remote desert corner of the earth, ay, and keep us there, and make us wish to stay, among beings of his own creation."

Maria enjoyed meeting Dr. Lushington there. Of "The Pirate," on finishing it, she writes: —

"The characters of the two sisters are beautiful. The idea of Brenda not believing in supernatural agency, and yet being afraid, and Minna not being afraid, though she believes in Norma's power, is new and natural and ingenious. This was Joanna Baillie's idea. The picture of the sisters sleeping, and the lacing scene, is excellent; and there are not only passages of beautiful, picturesque description, but many more deep, philosophical reflections upon the human mind, and the causes of human happiness, than in any of his other works. The satire upon agriculturists, imported from one country to another, who set to work to improve the land and habits of the people without being acquainted with the circumstances of either, is excellent."

They visited the Miss Baillies again. Maria enjoyed them very much, saying, —

"Most affectionate hospitality has been shown to us by these two excellent sisters. I part with Agnes and

Joanna Baillie confirmed in my opinion, that the one is the most amiable literary woman I ever beheld, and the other, one of the best informed and most useful."

She "rejoiced at Mr. Bushe's promotion," saying, "Mrs. Bushe sent to me, through Anne Nangle, a most kind message, alluding to our 'Patronage' chief justice by *second-sight*."

She was supposed to have drawn Mr. Bushe as the chief justice in "Patronage," and the character seemed so like him that it was recognized by those who knew him best. This was the meaning of Mrs. Bushe's message about his appointment by "*second-sight:*" for "Patronage" was published years before Mr. Bushe was made chief justice. During this winter, Miss Edgeworth met at Sir John Sebright's, Beechwood Park, —

"Mrs. Somerville, — little, slightly made; fair hair; pink color; small, gray, round, intelligent, smiling eyes; very pleasing countenance; remarkably soft voice; strong, but well-bred Scotch accent; timid, — not disqualifying timid, but naturally modest, — yet with a degree of self-possession throughout which prevents her being in the least awkward, and gives her all the advantage of her understanding, at the same time that it adds a prepossessing charm to her manner, and takes off all dread of her superior scientific learning.

"Mrs. Somerville is the lady who La Place says is the only woman in England who understands his works. She draws beautifully; and while her head is among the stars, her feet are firm upon the earth. I have this moment heard an anecdote which proves beyond a doubt — if any doubt remained — that Walter Scott is the author of the

novels. He edited 'The Memoir of the Somervilles,' and in the manuscript copy are his marks of what was to be omitted; and among these are what suggested to him the idea of Lady Margaret, and the *dis jeune* which his Majesty did her the honor to take with her, — continually referred to by an ancestor of Dr. Somerville."

The Misses Edgeworth went thence to Mardoaks, on a visit to Sir James and Lady Mackintosh. Of Sir James she writes, —

"He is improved in the art of conversation since we knew him; being engaged in great affairs with great men and great women has perfected him in the use and management of his wonderful natural powers, and vast, accumulated treasures of knowledge. His memory now appears to work less, his eloquence is more easy, his wit more brilliant, his anecdotes more happily introduced. Altogether, his conversation is even more delightful than formerly; superior to Dumont in imagination, and almost equal in wit. In Dumont's mien and conversation, wit and reason are kept separate; but in Mackintosh they are mixed, and he uses both in argument, knowing the full value and force of each. Never attempting to pass wit for logic, he forges each link of the chain of demonstration, and then sends the electric spark of wit through it. The French may well exclaim, in speaking of him, 'Quelle abondance!'

"He told us that at Berlin, just before a dinner at which were all the princes and ambassadors of Europe, Mme. de Staël, who had been invited to meet them, turning to a picture of Bonaparte, then at the height of his power, addressed it with Voltaire's lines to Cupid: —

'Qui que ce soit, voici ton maître!
Il est, le fut, ou le doit être!'"

Her sisters thought Sir James far surpassed their expectations. The two persons Fanny Edgeworth most wished to see in England were Ricardo and Mackintosh, and they saw both in their own houses to great advantage.

They met Lord Anglesey at Sir Thomas Lawrence's, where they went while with Lady Elizabeth Whitbread, at Grove House, Kensington, to whom they went from Sir James Mackintosh's. She says of Lord Anglesey, —

"He is no longer handsome, but a model for the 'nice conduct of a wooden leg.' It was within an inch of running through Walter Scott's picture, which was on the floor leaning on the wall; but, by a skilful, sidelong manœuvre, he bowed out of its way. His gray hair looks better than his Majesty's flaxen wig — bad taste.

"Saw at Sir Thomas Lawrence's studio his picture of the king in his coronation robes, the Pope, Walter Scott's too, etc."

Miss Edgeworth met Mr. Ralston of Philadelphia.

"His father and mother are grand, and, what is rather better, most benevolent people in Philadelphia. Introduced him to Dr. Holland, Mackintosh, and others. . . . I have had the greatest pleasure in Francis Beaufort's going with us to our delightful breakfasts at Mr. Ricardo's: they enjoy each other's conversation so much. It has now become high fashion, with blue ladies, to talk political economy, and to make a great jabbering on the subject; while others who have more sense, like Mrs. Marcet, hold their tongues, and listen. A gentleman answered very well the other day, when asked if he would

be of the famous Political-Economy Club, that he would whenever he could find two members of it that agree in any one point. Meantime fine ladies require that their daughters' governesses should teach political economy. 'Do you teach political economy?' — 'No; but I can learn it.' — 'Oh, dear, no! If you don't teach it, you wont do for me.'"

"Another style of governess is now the fashion, — the *Ultra French.* A lady governess of this party and one of the Orleans or *Libéraux* met, and came to high words; till all was calmed by the timely display of a ball-dress trimmed with roses, alternately red and white, — 'garniture aux préjugés vaincus.' This should have been worn by those who formerly invented in the Revolution 'Bals aux victimes.'"

During the months of March and February they were constantly in society: they had a charming breakfast at Mrs. Somerville's, and were often at Lansdowne House. They visited the House of Commons; and, as a change, Maria noted that she went to Newgate to hear Mrs. Fry, by appointment.

"The private door opened at the sight of our tickets; and the great doors, and the little doors, and the church doors, and doors of all sorts, were unbolted and unlocked, and on we went through dreary but clean passages, till we came to a room where rows of empty benches fronted us. A table on which lay a large Bible. Several ladies and gentlemen entered, and took their seats on benches at either side of the table, in silence.

"Enter Mrs. Fry in a drab-colored silk cloak, and plain, borderless Quaker cap; a most benevolent countenance, a Guido-Madonna face, calm, benign. 'I must

make an inquiry, Is Maria Edgeworth here? and where?' I went forward. She made us come and sit by her. Her first smile as she looked upon me, I can never forget. After the prisoners came in, — about thirty women, some under sentence of transportation for life, others for imprisonment, — she opened the Bible, and read in the most sweetly solemn, sedate voice I ever heard, slowly and distinctly, without any thing in the manner that would detract attention from the matter. Sometimes she paused to explain, which she did with great judgment, addressing the convicts, '*we* have felt, *we* are convinced.' They were very attentive, unaffectedly interested, I thought, in all she said, and touched by her manner. Far from being disappointed with the sight of what Mrs. Fry has effected, I was delighted. We emerged again from the thick, dark, silent walls of Newgate to the bustling city."

They visited Almack's.

"Kind Mrs. Hope got tickets for us from Lady Gwydir and Lady Cowper. Observe that the present Duchess of Rutland, who had been a few months absent from town, and had offended the lady patronesses by not visiting them, could not, at her utmost need, get a ticket from any one of them, and was kept out, to her amazing mortification. This may give you some idea of the importance attached to a ticket to Almack's. The lady patronesses can only give tickets to those whom they *personally know*. On that plea they avoided the Duchess of Rutland's application, — she had not visited them: they really did not know her Grace, etc. [Maria met] there many celebrated people, — the Marquis of Londonderry, who, by his own account, has been dying some time with impatience to be introduced to us;

talked much of 'Castle Rackrent,' etc., and Ireland. Of course I thought his manner and voice very agreeable. He is much fatter, and much less solemn, than when I saw him in the Irish House of Commons. He introduced us to jolly, fat Lady Londonderry, who was vastly gracious, and invited us to one of the four grand parties which she gives every season; and it surprised me very much to perceive the rapidity with which a minister's family talks to a person spread through the room. Everybody I met afterward that night and the next day *observed* to me that they had seen Lord Londonderry talking to me for a great while! We had a crowded party at Lady Londonderry's, but they had no elbows."

She met at other parties the celebrities of the day, — her old friend Sir Humphry Davy (whom she calls the martyr of matrimony), Mrs. Siddons, Lydia White, all the scientific set of the Somervilles. One amusing mention is made: —

"Yesterday we breakfasted at Mrs. Somerville's; and I put on for her a blue crape turban, to show her how Fanny's was put on, with which she had fallen in love."

Sir Walter Scott anticipated a visit from Miss Edgeworth with great delight. He wrote to Miss Joanna Baillie, in February: —

. . . "I am delighted with the prospect of seeing Miss Edgeworth, and making her personal acquaintance. I expect her to be just what you describe, — a being totally void of affectation, and who, like one other of my acquaintance, carries her literary reputation as freely and easily as the milkmaid in my country does the *leglen*,

which she carries on her head, and walks as gracefully with it as a duchess. Some of the fair sex, and some of the foul sex too, carry their renown in London fashion, — on a yoke and a pair of pitchers. The consequence is, that, besides poking frightfully, they are hitting every one on the shins with their buckets. Now this is all nonsense, too fantastic to be written to anybody but a person of good sense."

Miss Edgeworth met old Sir William Pepys, who was a contemporary of Johnson, Reynolds, and Burke. He was then eighty-two years old, and had many things to tell her of that interesting set of men and women who formed the fashionable and literary society of London many years before. Mrs. Montague, who was an intimate friend of his, once whispered to him on seeing a very awkward man coming into the room, "There is a man who would give one of his hands to know what to do with the other."

Miss Edgeworth said of the brilliancy, repartee, and social badinage of London, in her "Helen," "London wit is like gas, which lights at a touch, and at a touch can be extinguished;" and she enjoyed the good talk, the easy manners, and the high-bred culture of the friends she found among the many sets which made up the great world of Mayfair of her day. She remarked on this in a letter written during this visit: —

"The great variety of society in London, and the solidity of the sense and information to be gathered from conversation, strike me as far superior to Parisian society.

We know, I think, six different and totally independent sets, of scientific, literary, political, travelled, artist, and the fine fashionable of various shades; and the different styles of conversation are very entertaining. Through Lydia White we have become more acquainted with Mrs. Siddons than I ever expected to be. She gave us the history of her first acting of Lady Macbeth, and of her resolving in the sleep-scene to lay down the candlestick, contrary to the precedent of Mrs. Pritchard and all the traditions, before she began to wash her hands and say, 'Out, vile spot!'

"Sheridan knocked violently at her door during the five minutes she had desired to have entirely to herself, to compose her spirits before the play began. He burst in, and prophesied that she would ruin herself forever if she persevered in this resolution *to lay down the candlestick*. She persisted, however, in her determination, succeeded, was applauded, and Sheridan begged her pardon. She described well the awe she felt, and the power of excitement given to her by the sight of Burke, Fox, Sheridan, and Sir Joshua Reynolds in the pit.

"She invited us to a private reading-party at her own house; present, only her daughter (a very pretty young lady), a Mrs. Wilkinson, Mr. Burney, Dr. Holland, Lydia White, Mr. Harness, and ourselves. She read one of her finest parts, and that best suited to a private room,—Queen Katherine. She was dressed so as to do well for the two parts she was to perform this night, of gentlewoman and queen,—black velvet, with black velvet cap and feathers. She sat the whole time, and with a large Shakspeare before her; as she knew the part of Katherine by heart, she seldom required the help of glasses, and she recited it incomparably well. The changes of her countenance were striking. From her first burst of indig-

nation, when she objects to the cardinal as her judge, to her last expiring scene, was all so perfectly natural and so touching, we could give no applause but tears. Mrs. Siddons is beautiful even at this moment. Some who had seen her on the stage in this part assured me that it had a much greater effect upon them in a private room; because they were near enough to see the change in her countenance, and to hear the pathos of her half-suppressed voice. Some one said, that, in the dying-scene, her very pillow seemed sick.

"She spoke afterwards of the different parts which she had liked and disliked to act; and, when she mentioned the characters and scenes she had found easy or difficult, it was curious to observe that the feelings of the actress and the sentiments and reasons of the best critics meet. Whatever was not natural, or inconsistent with the main part of the character, she found she never could act well."

After spending a very pleasant Easter at Deepdene with a delightful party at the Hopes, the sisters hearing of the death of their old friend, Miss Charlotte Sneyd, at Edgeworthstown, left Deepdene, feeling the gayety oppressive under these circumstances. They went for more quiet to their friend Lady Elizabeth Whitbread's, at Kensington Gore. They then returned to their pleasant London lodgings in Hollis Street. On their return they found London very gay, and met many distinguished people.

"Among the great variety of illustrious and foolish people we have seen pass in rapid panoramas before us, some remain forever fixed in the memory, and some few touch the heart.

"Mr. Randolph, the American, very tall and thin, as if a stick, instead of shoulders, stretched out his coat; his hair tied behind with a black ribbon, but not pig-tailed, — it flows from the ribbon like old Steele's, with a curl at the end, mixed brown and gray; his face wrinkled like a peach-stone, but all pliable, muscles moving with every sensation of a feeling soul and lively imagination; quick dark eyes, with an indefinable expression of acquired habitual sedateness, in despite of nature; his tone of voice mild and repressed, yet in this voice he speaks thoughts that breathe and words that burn. He is one of the most eloquent men I ever heard speak; and there is a novelty in his view of things, and in his world of illusions in art and *nature*, which is highly interesting."

Visits at Frognel, Hampstead, Slough, Portsmouth, and Windsor followed.

The following letter from Sir Walter Scott will explain itself. Miss Edgeworth was obliged to decline a pressing invitation from Scott to visit Scotland and his family this year, but the next year we shall see her there.

[To Miss Edgeworth, Edgeworthstown.]

ABBOTSFORD, 24th April, 1822.

MY DEAR MISS EDGEWORTH, — I am extremely sorry indeed that you cannot fulfil your kind intentions to be at Abbotsford this year. It is a great disappointment, and I am grieved to think it should have arisen from the loss of a valued relation. That is the worst part of life, when its earlier path is trod. If my limbs get stiff, my walks are made shorter, and my rides slower; if my eyes fail me, I can use glasses and a large print; if I get a little deaf, I comfort myself, that, except in a few in-

stances, I shall be no great loser by missing one full half of what is spoken: but I feel the loneliness of age when my companions and friends are taken from me. The sudden death of both the Boswells, and the bloody end of the last, have given me great pain. You have never got half the praise "Vivian" ought to have procured you. The reason is, that the class from which the excellent portrait was drawn feel the resemblance too painfully to thank the author for it; and I do not believe the common readers understand it in the least. I who, thank God! am neither great man nor politician, have lived enough among them to recognize the truth and nature of the painting, and am no way implicated in the satire. . . . I had arranged to stay at least a month after the 12th of May, in hopes of detaining you at Abbotsford; and I will not let you off under a month or two the next year. I shall have my house completed, my library replaced, my armory new furnished, my piper new clothed, and the time shall be July. . . . I know nothing I should wish you to see which has any particular chance of becoming invisible in the course of fourteen months, excepting my old bloodhound, poor fellow, on whom age now sits so heavily that he cannot follow me far from the house. I wished you to see him very much. He is of that noble breed which Ireland, as well as Scotland, once possessed, and which is now almost extinct in both countries. I have sometimes thought of the final cause of dogs having such short lives, and I am quite satisfied it is in compassion to the human race; for if we suffer so much in losing a dog after an acquaintance of ten or twelve years, what would it be if they were to live double that time?

I don't propose being in London this year. . . . I do not like it. There is such a riding and driving, so much to see, so much to say, — not to mention plover's eggs and

champagne, — that I always feel too much excited in London; though it is good to rub off the rust too, sometimes, and brings you up abreast with the world as it goes.

The Misses Edgeworth returned to Ireland the last of June, and Maria at once went to work on the sequel to "Harry and Lucy." She read the play of Sir Walter Scott, and found it very stupid. This little play was written for a charitable purpose; and Miss Edgeworth quotes, in remarking upon it, Mme. de Staël's saying, "Les bons intentions ne sont pour rien, dans les ouvrages d'esprit."

In writing of the progress of "Harry and Lucy," she expressed her anxiety about its success; saying to a friend, who urged her to do some larger work of the imagination, —

"I assure you it is all I can do to satisfy myself tolerably as I go on with this sequel to 'Harry and Lucy,' which engages all my attention. I am particularly anxious to finish that *well*, as it was my dear father's own and *first* book. As it must be more scientific than the other 'Early Lessons,' it is more difficult to me, who have so little knowledge of those subjects, and am obliged to go so warily, lest I should teach error, or pretend to teach what I do not know. . . . I never could be easy writing any thing else for my own amusement till I have done this, which I know my father wished to have finished."

Miss Edgeworth did think, about this time, of writing a tale called "The Travellers," which would probably have embodied some of her own experi-

ences of travel; but she never made a sketch of it: other things proved more engrossing. During the winter of 1822–23 she made a visit at Black Castle. Mrs. Ruxton was always an inspiration to her niece, encouraging and animating her in any chosen work. She it was, Maria said long after, who first suggested to her the plot of "Castle Rackrent," and then urged her to go on with it, when the fear of failure, and her natural timidity, discouraged her.

Miss Edgeworth was delighted with "Peveril," though "there is too much of the dwarfs and the elfic."

"Scott cannot deny himself one of these spirits in some shape or other. I hope that we shall find this elfin page, who has the power of shrinking or expanding, as it seems, to suit the occasion, is made really necessary to the story. I think the dwarf more allowable, and better drawn than the page, true to history, and consistent; but Finella is sometimes handsome enough to make duke and and king ready to be in love with her, and sometimes an odious little fury, clenching her hands, and to be lifted up or down stairs out of the hero's way. The indistinctness about her is not that indistinctness which belongs to the sublime, but that which arises from unsteadiness in the painter's hand when he sketched the figure. He touched and retouched at different times, without having, as it seems, a determined idea himself of what he would make her; nor had he settled whether she should bring with her 'airs from heaven,' or blasts from that place which is never named to ears polite."

In May, 1823, after long anticipation of such a visit, Maria, taking with her her sisters Harriet and

Sophy, went to Scotland. Passing through Glasgow, they saw the Bannatynes, and were cordially received by them, after the lapse of twenty years which had gone since Maria was there with Mr. and Mrs. Edgeworth. They then went to Kinneil Castle, where Mr. and Mrs. Dugald Stewart then lived. After a few days pleasantly spent with their old friends, marred somewhat by the very poor health of Mr. Stewart, they left for Edinburgh, seeing on their way Linlithgow Palace. They arrived in Edinburgh, and found lodgings taken for them by the Alisons in Abercromby Place.

Mr. Lockhart wrote in his life of Scott: —

"Among the visitants at Abbotsford in 1823 were Miss Edgeworth and her sisters, Harriet and Sophia. After spending a few weeks in Edinburgh, and making a tour into the Highlands, they gave a fortnight to Abbotsford."

Scott wrote his first impressions of Maria, —

[To D. Terry.]

"CASTLE STREET, June 18, 1823.

"My marbles! my marbles! Oh! what must now be done?
My drawing-room is finished off, but marbles there are none.
My marbles! my marbles! I fancied them so fine,
The marbles of Lord Elgin were but a joke to mine.

"In fact, we are all on tiptoe now for the marbles and the chimney-grates, which being had and obtained, we will be less clamorous about other matters. I have very little news to send you: Miss Edgeworth is at present the great lioness of Edinburgh, and a very nice lioness. She is full of fun and spirit; a little, slight figure, very

active in her motions, very good-humored, and full of enthusiasm."

This Edinburgh visit was very agreeable to all the party. Maria had thought that city delightful twenty years before. Of course she found many changes. Her experience was not that of the ruler who found the city of wood, and left it stone; but she saw a larger circle of society and more cosmopolitan manners and customs. Some observers consider that the destinctive charm of the old city was lost at this time. Mrs. Fletcher, in her autobiography, speaks of the delightful society of Edinburgh: —

"The men then most distinguished in social intercourse, alike by literary reputation and amiable manners in society, Walter Scott, Mr. Jeffrey, Dr. Thomas Brown, Mr. Mackenzie, Mr. Thomas Thomson, Professor Playfair, Mr. Pillans, the Rev. Dr. Alison. A little before this time the forms of social meetings had somewhat changed from what they were when I knew Edinburgh first. Large dinner-parties were less frequent; and supper-parties — I mean hot suppers — were generally discarded. In their place came large evening parties (sometimes larger than the rooms could conveniently hold), where card-playing generally gave place to music or conversation. The company met at nine and parted at twelve o'clock; tea and coffee were handed about at nine, and the guests sat down to some light refreshments later on in the evening. People did not, in those parties, meet to eat, but to talk or listen. There you would see a group (chiefly of ladies) listening to the brilliant talk of Mr. Jeffrey; in a different part of the room, perhaps, another circle, amongst whom were the pale-faced, reverential students, lending

their ears to the playful, imaginative discussions of Dr. Brown, while Professor Playfair would sometimes throw in an ingenious or quiet remark that gave fresh animation to the discourse. On other occasions old Mr. Mackenzie would enliven the conversation with anecdotes of men and manners gone by."

Lord Brougham says of Mrs. Fletcher herself, that, "with the utmost purity of life that can dignify and enhance female charms, she combined the inflexible principles and deep political feeling of a Hutchinson and a Roland."

The changes noted by Mrs. Fletcher were of course inevitable: the fame of the city had caused the loss of just what she laments, by drawing to itself more and more people desirous of moving among the literary and scientific society which it boasted as its peculiar charm.

Mrs. Fletcher says of Miss Edgeworth, —

"In the spring of 1823 Maria Edgeworth and her two younger sisters spent some time in Edinburgh. We met first at my dear friend and pastor's house, the Rev. Mr. Alison. It was the first time I had been introduced to the author of 'Simple Susan;' though we were not unknown to each other, as she told me her brothers had often mentioned the agreeable society they met at our house when they were students at Edinburgh. Miss Edgeworth's personal appearance was not attractive; but her vivacity, good-humor, and cleverness in conversation, quite equalled my expectations. I should say she was more sprightly and brilliant than refined. She excelled in the raciness of Irish humor; but the great defect of her manner, as it seemed to me, was an excess of compli-

ment, or what in Ireland is called 'blarney;' and in one who had moved in the best circles, both as to manners and mind, it surprised me not a little. She repelled all approach to intimacy on my part, by the excess of her complimentary reception of me when we were first introduced to each other at Mr. Alison's. I never felt confidence in the reality of what she said afterwards. I do not know whether it was the absence of good taste in her, or that she supposed I was silly and vain enough to be flattered by such verbiage. It was the first time in my life I had met with such over-acted civility; but I was glad of an opportunity of meeting a person whose genius and powers of mind had been exercised in benefiting the world as hers have been. I feel sure from the feelings of those friends who love her, because they knew her well, that had this been the case with me, I might also have been one of her friends: so that I only give my impression as arising from that of society intercourse of a very superficial kind. Miss Edgeworth and her two very agreeable sisters were pleased to meet at our house Sir Robert and Lady Liston. They accompanied us some days after this to dine at Milburn Tower, the Listons' country-house, near Edinburgh. Miss Edgeworth's varied information and quick repartee appeared to great advantage in conversation with the polished ex-ambassador of Constantinople, who always reminded me of the couplet, —

> 'Polite, as all his life in courts had been,
> Yet good as he the world had never seen.'"

Mrs. Fletcher judged Maria to be insincere; forgetting that the warmth of her manner was perfectly natural, and her heart was warm and overflowing with benevolence.

Years after this, Miss Edgeworth put into the mouth of Lady Davenant in "Helen," a description of the appearance of Sir Walter Scott.

"'If you have seen Raeburn's admirable pictures, or Chantrey's speaking bust,' replied Lady Davenant, 'you have as complete an idea of Sir Walter Scott as painting or sculpture can give. The first impression of his appearance and manner was surprising to me, I recollect, from its quiet, unpretending good-nature; but scarcely had that impression been made, before I was struck with something of the chivalrous courtesy of other times. In his conversation you would have found all that is most delightful in all his works, — the combined talents and knowledge of the historian, novelist, antiquary, and poet. He recited poetry admirably, his whole face and figure kindling as he spoke; but whether talking, reading, or reciting, he never tired me, even with admiring. And it is curious, that, in conversing with him, I frequently found myself forgetting that I was speaking to Sir Walter Scott; and, what is even more extraordinary, forgetting that Sir Walter Scott was speaking to me, till I was awakened to the conviction by his saying something which no one else could have said. Altogether, he was certainly the most perfectly agreeable and perfectly amiable great man I ever knew.'"

CHAPTER XVII.

Account of the Meeting between Maria and Sir Walter Scott. — An Evening with him. — Edinburgh seen with Sir Walter. — The Lakes and the Highlands. — Abbotsford. — Happy Visit. — Return to Ireland. — Home Affairs. — Visitors. — The Mental Thermometer. — "Take for Granted." — Mr. Constable. — The Visit of Sir Walter Scott to Ireland. — His Stay at Edgeworthstown. — Their Trip to Killarny.

MISS EDGEWORTH'S first memorable meeting with Sir Walter Scott was immediately after her arrival in Edinburgh. They had corresponded for years, but had no previous personal acquaintance. She had a note from him the evening they arrived.

DEAR MISS EDGEWORTH, — I have just received your kind note, just when I had persuaded myself it was most likely I should see you in person, or hear of your arrival. Mr. Alison writes to me that you are engaged to dine with him to-morrow; which puts Roslin out of the question for that day, as it might keep you late. On Sunday I hope you will join our family party at five, and on Monday I have asked one or two of the Northern lights on purpose to meet you. I should be engrossing at any time, but we shall be more disposed to do so just now because on the 12th I am under the necessity of going to a different kingdom (only the kingdom of Fife) for a day or two. To-morrow, if it is quite agreeable, I will

wait upon you about twelve, and hope you will permit me to show you some of our improvements. I am always

Most respectfully yours,

WALTER SCOTT.

EDINBURGH, Friday.

POSTSCRIPT. — Our old family coach is *licensed* to carry *six*, so take no care on that score. I enclose Mr. Alison's note; truly sorry I could not accept the invitation it contains.

POSTSCRIPT. — My wife insists I shall add that the Laird of Staffa promised to look in on us this evening at eight or nine, for the purpose of letting us hear one of his clansmen sing some Highland boat-songs, and the like; and that if you will come, as the Irish should to the Scotch, without any ceremony, you will hear what is more curious than mellifluous. The man returns to the Isles to-morrow. There are no strangers with us, no party; none but all our own family, and two old friends. Moreover, all our womankind have been calling at Gibbs's Hotel: so if you are not really tired and late, you have not even pride — the ladies' last defence — to oppose to this request. But, above all, do not fatigue yourself and the young ladies. No dressing to be thought of!

"Ten o'clock struck as I read the note. We were tired, we were not fit to be seen; but I thought it right to accept Walter Scott's cordial invitation, sent for a hackney coach, and, just as we were, without dressing, went. As the coach stopped, we saw the hall lighted, and the moment the door opened, heard the joyous sounds of loud singing. Three servants 'the Miss Edgeworths' sounded from hall to landing-place; and, as I paused for a moment in the ante-room, I heard the first sound of Walter Scott's voice, — 'The Miss Edgeworths *come!*'

"The room was lighted by only one globe lamp. A circle were singing loud and beating time: all stopped in an instant; and Sir Walter Scott, in the most cordial and courteous manner, stepped forward to welcome us: 'Miss Edgeworth, this is so kind of you!'

"My first impression was, that he was neither so large nor so heavy in appearance as I had been led to expect by description, prints, bust, and picture. He is more lame than I expected, but not unwieldy. His countenance, even by the uncertain light in which I first saw it, pleased me much: benevolent and full of genius, without the slightest effort at expression, delightfully natural, as if he did not know he was Walter Scott, or the great unknown of the North, as if he only thought of making others happy. After naming to us 'Lady Scott, Staffa, my daughter Lockhart, Sophia, another daughter Anne, my son, my son-in-law Lockhart,' just in the broken circle as they then stood, and showing me that only his family and two friends, Mr. Clarke and Mr. Sharpe, were present, he sat down for a moment on a low sofa; and, on my saying, 'Do not let us interrupt what was going on,' he immediately rose and begged Staffa to bid his boatmen strike up again. 'Will you then join in the circle with us?'—he put the end of a silk handkerchief into my hand, and others into my sisters. They held by these handkerchiefs all in their circle again; and the boatman began to roar out a Gaelic song, to which they all stamped in time, and repeated a chorus, which, as far as I could hear, sounded like '*At am Vaun! at am Vaun!*' frequently repeated with prodigious enthusiasm. In another I could make out no intelligible sound but 'Bar! bar! bar!' But the boatman's dark eyes were ready to start out of his head with rapture as he sang and stamped, and shook the handkerchief on each side, and the circle imitated.

"Lady Scott is so exactly what I have seen her described, that it seemed as if we had seen her before. She must have been very handsome, — French, dark, large eyes, civil and good-natured.

"Supper at a round table, a family supper, with attention to us just sufficient, and no more. The impression left on my mind this night was, that Walter Scott is one of the best-bred men I ever saw, with all the exquisite politeness which he knows so well how to describe, which is of no particular school or country, but which is of all countries, — the politeness which arises from good and quick sense and feeling, which seems to know by instinct the character of others, to see what will please, and put all his guests at their ease. As I sat beside him at supper I could not believe he was a stranger, and forgot he was a great man. Mr. Lockhart is very handsome, quite unlike his picture in 'Peter's Letters.'"

When Sir Walter Scott made his visit to the Hebrides in 1810, he became acquainted with this gentleman, Sir Reginald Macdonald Stewart Seton of Staffa, Allantown, and Touch, and he described his sending his piper, a constant attendant, to wake a neighboring family for them. He wrote an enthusiastic and interesting description of Staffa and Iona, and tells how his way was beguiled by the boat-songs of the clan, in a letter to Joanna Baillie. In "The Lord of the Isles," he embalmed his memory of this time in verse: —

> "That wondrous dome,
> Where, as to shame the temples decked
> By skill of earthly architect,
> Nature herself it seemed would raise
> A minster to her Maker's praise."

Miss Edgeworth saw historic Edinburgh under the auspices of Scott.

"His conversation all the time better than any thing we could see, full of *apropos* anecdote, historic, serious or comic, just as occasion called for it; and all with a *bonhomie* and an ease that made us forget it was any trouble, even to his lameness, to mount flights of eternal stairs."

She found in Sir Walter peculiar charms.

"His strong affection for his early friends and his country gives a power and a charm to his conversation which cannot be given by the polish of the London world, and by the habit of literary conversation."

After these delightful days in seeing Edinburgh, which she described as "the most magnificent as well as the most romantic of cities," they saw Roslin Castle and its exquisite chapel with Scott; and then, being joined by their brother William, the party left for an excursion to the North, as William wished to see the great engineering works in the Highlands.

They saw all the romantic beauties of Loch Katrine and the mountains. One lovely day's drive Miss Edgeworth remarked on: —

"Mountains behind mountains, as far as the eye could reach, in every shade, from darkest to palest Indian ink, cloud-color; an ocean of mountains, with perpetually changing foreground of rocks, sometimes bare as they were born, sometimes wooded better than even the hand of mortal taste clothed a mountain in reality or picture, with oak, aspen, and the beautiful pendent birch."

Miss Edgeworth was taken ill at Forres on this journey, but soon recovered, and was able to continue this pleasant trip.

The following letter from Sir Walter Scott to Miss Joanna Baillie will show his impressions of Miss Edgeworth: —

"EDINBURGH, July 11, 1823.

"We saw, you will readily suppose, a great deal of Miss Edgeworth, and two very nice girls, her younger sisters. It is scarcely possible to say more of this very remarkable person than that she not only completely answered, but exceeded, the expectations which I had formed. I am particularly pleased with the *naïveté* and good-humored ardor of mind which she unites with such formidable powers of acute observation. In external appearance she is quite the fairy of our nursery-tale, — the Whippity Stourie, if you remember such a sprite, who came flying through the window to work all sorts of marvels. I will never believe but what she has a wand in her pocket, and pulls it out to conjure a little before she begins to draw those very striking pictures of manners. I am grieved to say, that, since they left Edinburgh on a tour to the Highlands, they have been detained at Forres, by an erysipelas breaking out on Miss Edgeworth's face. They have been twelve days there, and are now returning southwards, as a letter from Harriet informs me. I hope soon to have them at Abbotsford, where we will take good care of them, and the invalid in particular. What would I give to have you and Mrs. Agnes to meet them, and what canty cracks we would set up about the days of langsyne! The increasing powers of steam, which, like you, I look on half-proud, half-sad, half-angry, and half-pleased, in doing so much for the commercial world,

promise something also for the sociable, and, like Prince Houssein's tapestry, will, I think, one day waft friends together in the course of a few hours, and, for aught we may be able to tell, bring Hampstead and Abbotsford within the distance of, — 'Will you dine with us quietly to-morrow?' I wish I could advance this happy abridgment of time and space, so as to make it serve my present wishes."

On their return to Edinburgh, they passed a delightful day with the family of Lord Jeffrey, at Craigcrook.

On the 27th of July the Misses Edgeworth arrived at Abbotsford. Sir Walter was then at the height of his fame, and surrounded by a happy family circle. The gay walks, the evening conversation, the daily drives, made a bright and never-to-be-forgotten visit. In these drives, Sir Walter was full of never-ceasing talk; and wit and wisdom flowed from his boundless store. "He used to drive with his dog Spicer in his lap, and Lady Scott with her dog Ourisk in hers." Maria liked Lady Scott, while Lady Scott appreciated the kindly attention which Miss Edgeworth paid her. Too many of Sir Walter's visitors treated her with neglect or ridicule. Maria noted and admired the manner in which Lady Scott presided over a large establishment with judicious care and well-regulated hospitality. They saw, with Scott, Melrose Abbey, Ettrick Forest, and the ruins of Newark Hall, "where the ladies bent their necks of snow to hear the 'Lay of the last Minstrel.'"

Maria, on seeing Sir Walter in his own home at

Abbotsford, was more than ever charmed with him. There the strength and simplicity of his character showed itself.

"I never saw an author less of an author in his habits. This I early observed, but have been the more struck with it the longer I have been with him. He has, indeed, such variety of occupations, that he has not time to think of his own works: how he has time to write them, is the wonder. You would like him for his love of trees: a great part of his time out of doors is taken up in pruning his trees. I have, within this hour, heard a gentleman say to him, 'You have had a good deal of experience in planting, Sir Walter: do you advise much thinning, or not?' — 'I should advise much thinning, but little at a time. If you thin much at a time, you let in the wind, and hurt your trees.'"

Long afterwards Miss Edgeworth told Mrs. S. C. Hall, that she proposed to Scott that they should visit Melrose Abbey by moonlight, as she recalled with pleasure his famous lines, —

> "If thou wouldst view fair Melrose aright,
> Go visit it by the pale moonlight."

Scott at once assented, adding, "By all means, let us go, for I myself have never seen Melrose by moonlight."

Lockhart says, —

"The next month — August, 1823 — was one of the happiest in Scott's life. Never did I see a brighter day at Abbotsford than that on which Miss Edgeworth first arrived there: never can I forget her look and accent

when she was received by him at his archway, and exclaimed, 'Every thing about you is exactly what one ought to have had wit enough to dream!' The weather was beautiful, and the edifice and its appurtenances were all but complete; and day after day, so long as she could remain, her host had always some new plan of gayety. One day there was fishing on the Cauldshiels Loch, and a dinner on the heathy bank. Another, the whole party feasted by Thomas the Rymer's waterfall in the glen; and the stone on which Maria that day sat was ever afterwards called 'Edgeworth's stone.' A third day we had to go farther a-field. He must needs show her, not Newark only, but all the upper scenery of the Yarrow, where 'fair hangs the apple frae the rock;' and the baskets were unpacked about sunset, beside the ruined chapel overhanging St. Mary's Loch. And he had scrambled to gather bluebells and heath-flowers, with which all the young ladies must twine their hair; and they sang, and he recited, until it was time to go home, beneath the softest of harvest moons. Thus a fortnight was passed, and the vision closed."

During the visit to Abbotsford in 1823, commemorated in a pictorial group[1] in which he is included, Mr. Constable had the honor of meeting Miss Edgeworth; and the impression he made on her must have been favorable, for she begged him to communicate with her London publisher regarding plans he had suggested for promoting the sale of her works. Miss Edgeworth writes as follows, while on her homeward route: —

[1] By Mr. William Stewart Watson.

[Miss Edgeworth to Mr. Constable.]

GLASGOW, Aug. 13, 1823.

DEAR SIR, — You have gratified me much by your polite attention to my sisters. The present of the proof-engraving you have sent me is invaluable: the very thing for which I had wished, and had despaired of obtaining.

You talked of sending me a prospectus of your new encyclopædia. I wish you could send it to me while I am in Glasgow. I shall be here till Monday or Tuesday next. If you have not been able to procure the review of books for young people, do not trouble yourself more about it; because I can get it from Hunter, to whom I am going to write. I wish you would write to him the note of advice you proposed. Send it to me, and I will enclose it in my own letter.

I rejoice that we had the pleasure of meeting you at Abbotsford, and I am glad to owe this among the numberless other obligations I have to the *Great Known*.

Many may be, or may seem, *great* while unknown; but few like him, appear greater the more they are known.

I am, dear sir, your obliged,

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

After leaving the pleasant home of Scott, they went to Glasgow to their friends the Bannatynes, and by easy stages returned to Ireland by Port Patrick. They made some visits on their homeward way, and arrived at Edgeworthstown the 3d of September. Sir Walter wrote Miss Edgeworth after this visit, which made them very intimate friends for life. The following was his first letter: —

ABBOTSFORD, Sept. 22, 1823.

MY DEAR MISS EDGEWORTH, — Miss Harriet had the goodness to give me an account of your safe arrival in the Green Isle, of which I was, sooth to say, extremely glad; for I had my own private apprehensions that your very disagreeable disorder might return while you were among strangers, and in our rugged climate. I now conclude you are settled quietly at home, and looking back on recollections of mountains and valleys, and pipes and clans and cousins, and masons and carpenters and puppy-dogs, and all the confusion of Abbotsford, as one does on the recollections of a dream. We shall not easily forget the vision of having seen you and our two young friends, and your kind indulgence for all our humors, sober and fantastic, rough or smooth. Mamma writes to make her own acknowledgments for your very kind attention about the cobweb stockings, which reached us under the omnipotent frank of Crocker, who, like a true Irish heart, never scruples stretching his powers a little to serve a friend.

We are all here much as you left us, only in possession of our drawing-room, and glorious with our gas-lights, which as yet have only involved us once in total darkness, once in a temporary eclipse. In both cases the remedy was easy, and the cause obvious; and if the gas has no greater objections than I have yet seen or can anticipate, it is soon like to put wax and mutton-suet entirely out of fashion. I have recovered, by great accident, another verse or two of Miss Sophia's beautiful Irish air: it is only curious as hinting at the cause of the poor damsel-of-the-red-petticoat's deep dolour: —

"I went to the mill, but the miller was gone:
I sat me down and cried ochone,
To think on the days that are past and gone,
Of Dickie Macphalion that's slain.
Shool, shool, etc.

I sold my rock, I sold my reel,
And sae hae I my spinning-wheel, —
And all to buy a cap of steel
For Dickie Macphalion that's slain.
Shool, shool, etc."

But who was Dickie Macphalion for whom this lament was composed? Who was the Pharaoh for whom the pyramid was raised? The questions are equally dubious and equally important; but as the one, we may reasonably suppose, was a king of Egypt, so I think we may guess the other to have been a captain of Rapparees, since the ladies, God bless them, honor with the deepest of their lamentation, gallants who live wildly, die bravely, and scorn to survive until they become old and not worth weeping for. So much for Dickie Macphalion, who, I dare say, was in his day, "a proper young man." We have had Sir Humphry Davy here for a day or two — very pleasant and instructive.

I wish Miss Harriet would dream no more ominous visions about Spicer. The poor thing has been very ill of that fatal disorder proper to the canine race, called, *par excellence, the distemper*. I have prescribed for her, as who should say thus you would doctor a dog; and I hope to bring her through, as she is a very affectionate little creature, and of a fine race. She has still an odd wheezing, however, which makes me rather doubtful of success. The Lockharts are both well, and at present our lodgers, together with John Hugh, or, as he calls himself, Donichue, which sounds like one of your old Irish kings. They all join in every thing kind and affectionate to you and the young ladies, and best compliments to your brother. Believe me ever, dear Miss Edgeworth, yours, with the greatest truth and respect,

WALTER SCOTT.

One can well imagine what an enjoyment this journey to Scotland was to Miss Edgeworth. A delightful episode in a life not uneventful or uninteresting. After her return, she described herself as doing "nothing but idling and reading, and paving a gutter and yard to Honora's pig-sty and schoolhouse:" this seems a truly Irish combination of the "pig-sty and schoolhouse."

While Miss Edgeworth was at Abbotsford, she related the story of Carabou, and the imposture practised by her; and Sir Walter used this incident in his "St. Ronan's Well."

In January of the year 1824 Miss Edgeworth made a visit to her friends at Pakenham Hall. In March of this year her sister Sophy married their cousin, Capt. Barry Fox.

Scott wrote a letter which contained the following allusion to this event, Maria having announced the marriage of her sister: —

"I do not delay a moment to send my warmest and best congratulations upon the very happy event which is about to take place in your family, and to assure you that you do me but common justice in supposing that I take the warmest interest in whatever concerns my young friends. All Abbotsford to an acre of Poyais, that she will make an excellent wife; and most truly happy am I to think that she has such an admirable prospect of matrimonial happiness, although at the expense of thwarting the maxim, and showing that 'the course of true love *sometimes may* run smooth.' It will make a pretty vista, as I hope and trust, for you, my good friend, to look forwards with an increase of interest to futurity. Lady

Scott, Anne, and Sophia, send their sincere and hearty congratulations upon this joyful occasion. I hope to hear her sing 'The Petticoat of Red' some day in her own house. I should be apt to pity you a little amid all your happiness, if you had not my friend Miss Harriet, besides other young companions, whose merits are only known to me by report, to prevent your feeling, so much as you would otherwise, the blank which this event must occasion in your domestic society. . . . There was great propriety in Miss Harriet's dream, after all; for if ever a dog needed six legs, poor Spicer certainly requires a pair of additional supporters. She is now following me a little, though the duty of body-guard has devolved for the present on a cousin of hers, — a fierce game devil that goes at every thing, and has cowed Ourisque's courage in a most extraordinary degree, to Lady Scott's great vexation. Here is a tale of dogs[1] and dreams and former days! But the only pleasure in writing is to write whatever comes readiest to the pen. My wife and Anne send kindest compliments of congratulation, as also Charles, who has come down to spend four or five months with us: he is just entered at Brazen Nose — on fire to be a scholar of classical renown, and studying (I hope the humor will last) like a very dragon.

"Always, my dear Miss Edgeworth, with best love to the bride and to dear Harriet,

"Very much yours,

"WALTER SCOTT."

While Miss Edgeworth was making a visit at Black Castle in July of this year, the news arrived

[1] Sir Walter Scott raised one dog of his famous Dandie Dinmont breed for Miss Edgeworth; but it died, and then came his trouble and ill-health, and he did not attempt to give her a dog.

of Mrs. Beddoes's death in Florence. Miss Edgeworth was very much attached to her; and once, when some one remarked that they looked much like each other, she expressed pleasure at the thought. There were many visitors during the summer; and among them may be named Mr. Hunter the publisher, Mr. Butler, and a Mr. Hamilton, whom Maria called "an Admirable Crichton of eighteen." It was in December of this year that Maria received a superb portfolio from a Jewish lady, a Miss Yates of Liverpool, with the name "Harrington" on it,—a remembrance of her regard for the Jews, in writing that tale which had for its hero a good Jew.

In January of 1825 Miss Edgeworth had a request from a foreigner settled in London, a publisher by the name of Lupton Relfe, that she would look over her portfolio for something for an Annual he was preparing. She recollected "The Mental Thermometer,"[1] which had never been printed, except in an Irish farmers' journal not known in England.

"So [she adds] I rooted in the garret under pyramids of old newspapers, with my mother's prognostications that I never should find it, and loud prophecies that I should catch my death; which I did not: but, dirty and dusty and cobwebby, I came forth, after two hours' grovelling, with my object in my hand! Cut it out, added a few lines of new end to, and packed it off to Lupton Relfe; telling him it was an old thing written when I was sixteen. Weeks elapsed, and I heard no more; when there came a letter, exuberant in gratitude, and sending

[1] See Appendix.

a parcel containing six copies of the new Memorandum Book, and a most beautiful twelfth edition of 'Scott's Poetical Works,' bound in the most elegant manner, and with most beautifully engraved frontispieces and vignettes, and a five-pound note. I was quite ashamed; but I have done all I could for him by giving the 'Friendship's Offering' to all the fine people I could think of. The set of 'Scott's Works' made a nice New-Year's gift for Harriet. She had seen this edition in Edinburgh, and particularly wished for it. Made a present of the five pounds to some one else. I might have looked over my portfolio till doomsday, as I have not an unpublished scrap, except 'Take for Granted.'"

This "Take for Granted" Miss Edgeworth made many notes for, but never finished it. This remark of hers would seem to clearly disprove the statement sometimes made, that she left many manuscripts, as she was certainly at the height of her powers at this time; and if she had no unpublished writings in 1825, it is not probable that she left any manuscripts of importance. "Take for Granted" never quite pleased her, and she worked many years at it; but it reached no more definite shape than notes. In writing late at night at this time, she playfully adds, as she felt guilty on hearing the carriage, with Mrs. Edgeworth, rolling up to the door, —

"Yours affectionately, in all the haste of guilt conscience-stricken, that is, found out. No! All safe, all innocent, because *not found out*. Finis.

"By the author of 'Moral Tales' and 'Practical Education.'"

[Miss Edgeworth to Mr. Constable.]

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, Nov. 18, 1824.

DEAR SIR, — I have received from some unknown friend a perfect copy of "Reginald Dalton," for which I suspect that I am obliged to you. If so, accept my thanks. I assure you that when I asked for a few pages, I did not mean to beg a book. The copy which I first possessed I shall keep as a curiosity, on which future commentators in future ages may write ingeniously on the inexhaustible subject of the Scotch novels.

"Matthew Wald" has great power. I am sorry his story came to such a horrid, and unnecessarily and unconscionably horrid, a conclusion.

I am delighted with "Redgauntlet." The author has made more of rebellion, and more of the *Pre — Che* — than any man alive or dead ever did.

I, in common with thousands and tens of thousands, am impatient for the next production of that exhaustless genius. Christmas, I hope, will find us all happily at "The Crusades."

I am, dear sir, with many thanks for your obliging attentions,

Yours sincerely,

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

Mr. Constable wrote, begging Miss Edgeworth's co-operation in the scheme for his encyclopædia. She replied as follows: —

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, Jan. 19, 1825.

DEAR SIR, — I have delayed answering your obliging letter, that I might get an opinion from a friend in England upon your plan; which, as he is a man of science and high reputation in the scientific world, must be worth

much more to you than mine can be, ignorant as I am of science or of the requisites, for such an encyclopædia as you propose to form. As far as I can judge, I agree completely with my friend's opinion, which I enclose to you. I think for youth you should not give treatises on each subject; indeed, for all people there is an encyclopædia too much or too little. Those who want to study deeply must go through the regular means of study, in the complete treatises published in different works on the subjects; but in referring to an encyclopædic dictionary, young people especially want immediate, precise information of the meaning of certain terms, or of the means of accomplishing certain purposes. It should be, therefore, more practical than theoretic. If I were you, in the first place I would weed out all the heads in your present prospectus which would be general treatises, and class the others into what are essential, necessary in the next degree, and so on. When you have thus got rid of what is obviously superfluous for your purpose, compress again and again, till you get your design into the smallest compass that will hold the needful: portion this out to the most skilful hands, make it worth their while; and then you secure the solid reputation of your book by their work, and its celebrity by their names. When this is done, you may, if you want bulk, add what other articles you please. If you make, as my friend advises, your arrangement alphabetical, you will have no trouble.

For mercy's sake, make your writers say all they have to say under one good head, and not refer the wretched readers from one letter to another, till their patience and desire for information be absolutely worn out, — *Arch*, see Building; *Building*, see Masonry; *Masonry*, see Architecture, Civil, Gothic, etc.; and then a whole treatise on each before you can get the simple meaning of an arch, or how to construct one.

You told me in your letter that you enclosed some list of articles which you particularly wished from me. No such list came in your letter. No matter, for I have as much on my hands at present as I can possibly do till Easter: therefore I would not undertake *any thing* for you till after that time.[1]

I am highly flattered by the compliment you intended me in putting an engraving of my portrait in this work. But, independently of the reason which could induce me to decline it for your sake as quite unsuited to your work, it is impossible I should give it you, as I have refused my portrait to my nearest relations. I truly think that both the public and I shall be better off in consequence of this my determination.

I see my father's name in your prospectus. I certainly do not wish *that* to be struck out. I think I see your kind intentions to have justice done to his memory, and to his *professional education*. I thank you: you could not gratify me more. Command me in any assistance I am able to give as soon as my having accomplished my present engagements gives me time at my own disposal.

My friend Mr. Butler was grateful for your attentions to him, and for the fine engraving of Sir Walter Scott which you gave him. If you can, pray send me "The Crusaders" before they are published. . . .

If a pretty, elegant, lady's memorandum-book, whose title is, I think, "Friendship's Offering, or Lady's Remembrancer," should come from London to Edinburgh, pray give it a good puff, and a good push forward. The publisher, a man of a strange name, Lupton Relfe, is unknown to me; but he besought me to give him a help-

[1] *The subjects* which Mr. Constable desired that Miss Edgeworth should contribute were, Female Education; Etiquette; Recreations, Rational and Useful, for the Female Sex.

ing hand, and told me he had expended fifteen hundred pounds in getting up this pretty trifle. I sent him a few pages containing an old thermometer, a *Mental Thermometer*, constructed when I was sixteen. He sent me in return a hundred thousand times more than it was worth, — a beautiful copy of Scott's poetical works, your duodecimo edition, with the frontispiece portrait of Sir Walter, and beautiful little vignettes.

I feel as if I had taken bounty-money, and enlisted to serve him; and I really have no power to do so: pray help me, for you can. I sent his pocket-book to Lady Scott, I think by Mr. Butler, but have never heard of her receiving it. I am, dear sir, yours sincerely,

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

This was a very favorite project of Constable's; and Mr. Jeffrey alluded to a plan of one proposed by him as early as 1804, in a letter he was writing to Francis Horner. The business crisis in Mr. Constable's affair brought the plan to an end.

Miss Edgeworth heard of her old friend Mrs. Barbauld's death in March, 1825, while she was at Black Castle, and wrote as follows: —

"You have probably seen in the papers the death of our admirable friend, Mrs. Barbauld. I have copied for you her last letter to me, and some beautiful lines written in her eightieth year. There is a melancholy elegance and force of thought in both. Elegance and strength — qualities rarely uniting without injury to each other — combined most perfectly in her style; and this rare combination, added to their classical purity, forms perhaps the distinguishing characteristics of her writings. England has lost a great writer, and we a most sincere friend."

There is a nice discrimination and analysis of character shown in these words about Mrs. Barbauld.

"In reading one of the most paltry quartos I ever opened," said Miss Edgeworth at this time, "'The Life of Murphy,' a perfect sample of the art of book-making, I found two excellent things in proof of my system that there is no book so worthless but we may find some good in it."

She was surprised to see herself mentioned at length, and a discussion of her writings, in the review of the novel "Tremaine," in the new "Monthly Magazine" for May, 1825. She said she was in this review "like Mahomet's coffin, between heaven and earth."

During Moore's visit to Ireland in this year, he mentions driving with Sir Philip Crampton, in his gig, in the Phœnix Park, Dublin, and adds, —

"He gave me some pretty verses of his own to Miss Edgeworth, with Sir Walter Scott's pen; showed me some verses of hers to himself, strongly laudatory, but very bad."

Miss Edgeworth wrote the following letter to Constable in behalf of a *protégée*: —

[Miss Edgeworth to Mr. Constable.]

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, March 12, 1825.

SIR, — Some very interesting letters, from a lady who has been for these last four years resident in Upper Canada, have been lately put into my hands: I have advised their publication, and have obtained permission that they should be published. I know the lady by whom

they are written. I saw each letter as it came from Canada to her friends here, and can vouch for their authenticity, and for the letters not having been written with any view to publication. On this their merit in a great measure depends. They contain a view never yet laid before the public, of the details and progress of an Irish settler's life in Canada. They have interested everybody who has seen them, by their perfect truth and simplicity, and from their letting us behind the scenes, and telling what no one writing a book for the public would think of telling. The lady was bred up in the first circle of society, is highly accomplished, and was, when she married, apparently successor to a very considerable fortune. The roguery of some of her relatives, and the misfortunes of others, suddenly reduced her husband from opulence to the necessity of emigrating to America to settle on a grant of crown-land in Canada. From the moment she followed her husband's fallen fortunes thither, she *made* herself to her changed state; and such has been her fortitude, and such her exertions, as have interested every creature that knows them, in her favor. These letters have made them known to many who were strangers to her; and, judging by the impression they have made on persons of different tastes, I cannot hesitate about their publication. Her name must not be told. But I will willingly put my name to a preface vouching their authenticity. My object, I plainly tell you, is to assist in making up for her and for her husband and children a sum which may enable them to visit, once again in their lives, their native country for a few weeks.

I do not think the letters have body or solidity enough to stand as a separate publication; but I think, and am confident, that they have spirit and soul enough to interest much in a periodical publication. I have a periodical

publication in London open to me, which I know will gladly accept them on my recommendation; but I prefer offering them to you. With as much frankness as I write to you, answer me, whether from this account you are disposed to publish them in your "Edinburgh Journal." I have not yet all the letters before me, therefore I cannot tell you how much they will altogether make in print. Tell me the number of letters in your sheet of journal, and I will count them off. Let me also know what you can afford to give per sheet. The fairest way would be, I think, to try one sheet.

Send your answer to Dr. Brewster's, directed to me; and he will enclose it in a packet, which will come free to me through Lord Rosse's frank.

I am, yours sincerely,

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

In answer to him, after a letter containing a liberal offer for the letters, she replied, expressing herself very honestly as to the merits of the letters on further examination, —

[To Mr. Constable.]

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, April 14, 1825.

DEAR SIR, — I am much obliged by your letter and liberal conduct. I feel obliged to you (independently of all that may be gratifying to myself in this transaction) for giving me the pleasure of seeing such frank and generous dealing. In fact, I am more obliged than if I profited by your offer for my friend or for myself. But the fact is, that upon looking over these letters again, I find so much of the interest depends upon *personal narrative* and details which cannot be laid before the public, that after all the garbling and suppression of names and so forth, I appre-

hend I could not honestly insure to you their success; and, without feeling internally convinced at least of their deserving literary success, I could not recommend them to you, trusting, as I see you so handsomely do, to my pure and sole recommendation.

Besides this, another qualm of conscience has seized me: an inconsistency stares me in the face! A literary friend has just applied to me for some of the letters of a lately deceased celebrated person, which were addressed to me. I have (since I wrote to you) refused them; declaring it to be my principle never to give up private letters to publication, expressing my belief that this publishing of letters tends to weaken and destroy private confidence.

While I was writing this letter, suddenly it flashed across my mind, that I could not afterwards, with any consistency, put my name to a preface to the Canada letters I was recommending to you; for, though the lady and her friends consent to the publication, yet still what becomes of my principle about the tendency to destroy private confidence, which I believe would be the result of this practice?

Let me repeat my thanks to you for your frank and gentlemanlike conduct, and wish you all the success and happiness such conduct deserves.

I am, with due esteem, your obliged,

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

In August of 1825 Edgeworthstown received the great "known," as he was often called in later years. Sir Walter Scott arrived at the home of Miss Edgeworth, accompanied by his daughter and the surgeon-general, Sir Philip Crampton, the friend of whom Moore so often writes. Capt. and Mrs. Scott and

Mr. Lockhart were detained in Dublin, and did not reach Edgeworthstown till some hours after the rest of the party.

This was a very happy event in Miss Edgeworth's life, and a proud moment for Ireland, when the greatest writer of the sister isle visited her shores; full of eagerness to study the habits of the people, see the picturesque spots and the places of note in the country, made famous by the pen of one whom he loved and respected.

Lockhart wrote of this journey: —

"On the 1st of August we proceeded from Dublin to Edgeworthstown, the party being now re-enforced by Capt. and Mrs. Scott, and also by the delightful addition of the surgeon-general,[1] who had long been an intimate friend of the Edgeworth family, and equally gratified both the novelists by breaking the toils of his great practice to witness their meeting on his native soil. A happy meeting it was. We remained there for several days, making excursions to Loch Oel and other scenes of interest in Longford and the adjoining counties; the gentry everywhere exerting themselves with true Irish zeal to signalize their affectionate pride in their illustrious countrywoman, and their appreciation of her guest: while her brother, Mr. Lovell Edgeworth, had his classical mansion filled every evening with a succession of distinguished friends, the *élite* of Ireland. Here, above all, we had the opportunity of seeing in what universal respect and comfort a gentleman's family may live in that country, and in far from its most favored district, provided only they live there habitually, and do their duty as the friends and guard-

[1] Crampton.

dians of those among whom Providence has appointed their proper place. Here we found neither mud hovels nor naked peasantry, but snug cottages and smiling faces all about. Here there was a very large school in the village, of which masters and pupils were, in nearly equal proportion, Protestants and Roman Catholics; the Protestant squire himself making it a regular part of his daily business to visit the scene of their operations, and strengthen authority and enforce discipline by his personal superintendence. Here, too, we pleased ourselves with recognizing some of the sweetest features in Goldsmith's picture of

'Sweet Auburn! loveliest village of the plain.'

. . . "It may well be imagined with what lively interest Sir Walter surveyed the scenery with which so many of the proudest recollections of Ireland must ever be associated, and how curiously he studied the rural manners it presented to him, in the hope (not disappointed) of being able to trace some of his friend's bright creations to their first hints and germs. On the delight with which he contemplated her position in the midst of her own large and happy domestic circle, I need say still less. The reader is aware by this time how deeply he condemned and pitied the conduct and fate of those, who, gifted with pre-eminent talents for the instruction and entertainment of their species at large, fancy themselves entitled to neglect those every-day duties and charities of life, from the mere shadowing of which in imaginary pictures the genius of poetry and romance has always reaped its highest and purest, perhaps its only true and immortal honors. In Maria he hailed a sister-spirit; one who, at the summit of literary fame, took the same modest, just, and, let me add, *Christian* view of the relative importance of the feelings, the

obligations, and the hopes, in which we are all equally partakers, and those talents and accomplishments which may seem, to vain and short-sighted eyes, sufficient to constitute their possessors into an order and species apart from the rest of their kind. Such fantastic conceits found no shelter with either of these powerful minds. I was then a young man; and I cannot forget how much I was struck at the time by some words that fell from one of them, when, in the course of a walk in the park at Edgeworthstown, I happened to use some phrase which conveyed (though not perhaps meant to do so) the impression that I suspected poets and novelists of being a good deal accustomed to look at life and the world only as materials for art. A soft and pensive shade came over Scott's face as he said, 'I fear you have some very young ideas in your head. Are you not too apt to measure things by some reference to literature, to disbelieve that anybody can be worth much care, who has no knowledge of that sort of thing, or taste for it? God help us! what a poor world this would be if that were the true doctrine! I have read books enough, and observed and conversed with enough of eminent and splendidly cultivated minds, too, in my time; but I assure you I have heard higher sentiments from the lips of poor, *uneducated* men and women, when exerting the spirit of severe, yet gentle heroism under difficulties and afflictions, or speaking their simple thoughts as to circumstances in the lot of friends and neighbors, than I ever yet met with out of the pages of the Bible. We shall never learn to feel and respect our real calling and destiny, unless we have taught ourselves to consider every thing as moonshine, compared with the education of the heart.' Maria did not listen to this without some water in her eyes, — her tears are always ready when any generous string is touched (for, as Pope says, 'The finest

minds, like the finest metals, dissolve the easiest'), — but she brushed them gayly aside, and said, 'You see how it is. Dean Swift said he had written his books in order that people might learn to treat him like a great lord. Sir Walter writes his in order that he may be able to treat his people as a great lord ought to do.'

"Miss Edgeworth, her sister Harriet, and her brother William, were easily persuaded to join our party for the rest of our Irish travels. We had lingered a week at Edgeworthstown, and were now anxious to make the best of our way towards the Lakes of Killarney. But posting was not to be very rapidly accomplished in those regions by so large a company as had now collected; and we were more agreably delayed by the hospitalities of Miss Edgeworth's old friends, and several of Sir Walter's new ones, at various mansions on our line of route: of which I must note especially Judge Moore's at Lamberton, near Maryborough, because Sir Walter pronounced its beneficence to be even beyond the usual Irish scale; for on reaching our next halting-place, which was an indifferent country inn, we discovered that we need be in no alarm as to our dinner, at all events, — the judge's people having privately packed up in one of the carriages, ere we started in the morning, a pickled salmon, a most lordly venison pasty, and half a dozen bottles of champagne. But most of these houses seemed, like the judge's, to have been constructed on the principle of the Peri Banou's tent. They seemed all to have room not only for the lion and lionesses, and their respective tails, but for all in the neighborhood who could be held worthy to inspect them at feeding-time.

"It was a succession of festive gayety wherever we halted; and in the course of our movements we saw many castles, churches, and ruins of all sorts, with more than

enough of mountain, wood, lake, and river, to have made any similar progress, in any other part of Europe, truly delightful in all respects. But those of the party to whom the south of Ireland was new had almost continually before them spectacles of abject misery, which robbed these things of more than half their charm. . . . There was, however, abundance of ludicrous incidents to break this gloom; and no traveller ever tasted either the humors or the blunders of Paddy more heartily than did Sir Walter. I find recorded in one letter a very merry morning at Limerick, where, amidst the ringing of all the bells, in honor of the advent, there was ushered in a brother-poet, who must needs pay his personal respects to the author of 'Marmion.' He was a scarecrow figure, attired much in the fashion of the *strugglers*, by name O'Kelly; and he had produced, on the spur of the occasion, this modest parody of Dryden's famous epigram: —

> 'Three poets, of three different nations born,
> The United Kingdom in this age adorn, —
> Byron of England; Scott, of Scotia's blood;
> And Erin's pride, O'Kelly, great and good.'

"Sir Walter's five shillings were at once forthcoming; and the bard, in order that Miss Edgeworth might display equal generosity, pointed out, in a little volume of his works (for which, moreover, we had all to subscribe), this pregnant couplet: —

> 'Scott, Morgan, Edgeworth, Byron, prop of Greece,
> Are characters whose fame not soon will cease.'

"We were still more amused (though there was real misery in the case) with what befell on our approach to a certain pretty seat, in a different county, where there was a collection of pictures and curiosities, not usually shown to travellers. A gentleman, whom we had met in Dublin,

had been accompanying us part of the day's journey, and volunteered, being acquainted with the owner, to procure us easy admission. At the entrance of the domain, to which we proceeded under his wing, we were startled by the dolorous apparition of two undertaker's men, in voluminous black scarfs, — though there was little or nothing of black about the rest of their habiliments, — who sat upon the highway before the gate, with a whiskey-bottle on a deal table between them. They informed us that the master of the house had died the day before, and that they were to keep watch and ward in this style until the funeral, inviting all Christian passengers to drink a glass to his repose. Our *cicerone* left his card for the widow, having previously, no doubt, written on it the names of his two lions. Shortly after we regained our post-house, he received a polite answer from the lady. To the best of my memory, it was in these terms: —

"'Mrs. —— presents her kind compliments to Mr. ——, and much regrets that she cannot show the pictures to-day, as Major —— died yesterday evening by apoplexy; which Mrs. —— the more regrets, as it will prevent her having the honor to see Sir Walter Scott and Miss Edgeworth.'"

"Sir Walter said it reminded him of a woman of Fife, who, summing up the misfortunes of a black year in her history, said, 'Let me see, sirs: first we lost our wee callant, and then Jenny; and then the gudeman himsel' died, and then the *coo* died too, poor hizzey! — but, to be sure, *her* hide brought me fifteen shillings.'

"At one country-gentleman's table where we dined, though two grand full-length daubs of William and Mary adorned the walls of the room, there was a mixed company, about as many Catholics as Protestants, all apparently on cordial terms, and pledging each other lustily in

bumpers of capital claret. About an hour after dinner, however, punch was called for: tumblers and jugs of hot water appeared, and with them two magnums of whiskey, the one bearing on its label KING'S, the other QUEEN'S. We did not at first understand these inscriptions, but it was explained, *sotto voce*, that the King's had paid the duty, the Queen's was of contraband origin: and, in the choice of the liquors, we detected a new shibboleth of party. The jolly Protestants to a man stuck to the King's bottle: the equally radiant Papists paid their duty to the Queen's.

"Since I have not alluded at all to the then grand dispute, I may mention, that, after our tour was concluded, we considered with some wonder, that, having partaken liberally of Catholic hospitality, and encountered almost every other class of society, we had not sat at meat with one specimen of the Romish priesthood; whereas, even at Popish tables, we had met dignitaries of the Established Church. This circumstance we set down at the time as amounting pretty nearly to a proof that there were few gentlemen in that order, but we afterwards were willing to suspect that a prejudice of their own had been the source of it. The only incivility which Sir Walter Scott ultimately discovered himself to have encountered (for his friends did not allow him to hear of it at the time), in the course of his Irish peregrination, was the refusal of a Roman-Catholic gentleman named O'Connell, who kept stag-hounds near Killarney, to allow of a hunt on the Upper Lake the day he visited that beautiful scenery. This he did, as we were told, because he considered it as a notorious fact, that Sir Walter Scott was an enemy to the Roman-Catholic claims for admission to seats in Parliament. He was entirely mistaken however."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Maria and Sir Walter Scott travel to the Lakes. — Delightful Days. — Return to Dublin. — Parting of the Novelists. — Irish Commercial Difficulties. — Maria meets the Crisis in Money Affairs successfully. — Sir Humphry Davy. — Captain Hall. — Maria forms Habit of Morning Exercise. — "Take for Granted" announced without Permission. — Miss Anna Edgeworth's Bequest. — Maria's Disposition of It. — Fire. — Captain Hall's Journals. — Scott's Introduction to the Waverley Novels. — Many Deaths among Maria's Friends. — Maria at Work on "Helen." — Distress and Famine in Ireland. — Visit to England. — Sees many Friends. — Lansdowne. — Duchess of Wellington. — Baillies. — Carrs. — Mrs. Wilson. — Mackintoshes. — Herschels. — Ireland. — Enjoyment of London. — Notes for "Helen." — Death of Scott.

THIS large party travelled in an open calèche of Sir Walter's, and Captain Scott's chariot, and changed their position as fancy dictated or the weather made it necessary. Sir Walter said, when some difficulty occurred at one post-house about getting fresh horses, —

"Swift in one of his letters, when no horses were to be had, says, 'If we had but had a captain of horse to swear for us, we should have had the horses at once;' now here we have the captain of horse, but the landlord is not moved even by him."

Sir Walter and Maria were both excellent travellers, not easily put out by trifles, and always ready to make the best of every thing. He was diverted by Miss Edgeworth's eagerness for every one's com-

fort, and her enthusiasm. He amused himself with her admiration of a green baize covered door at the inn at Killarney: "Miss Edgeworth, you are so mightily pleased with that door, I think you will carry it away with you to Edgeworthstown." Long years after this excursion to the Lakes, Lord Macaulay in visiting Killarney had a boatman who "gloried in having rowed Sir Walter Scott and Miss Edgeworth twenty-four years ago. It was, he said, a compensation to him for having missed a hanging which took place that day."

The reason of the failure of the stag-hunt at the Lakes alluded to by Mr. Lockhart was because the proprietor of the hounds had lost his brother-in-law the night before the party arrived at Killarney. The letter of Miss Edgeworth to Miss Hall fully explains the circumstances. She pointed this fact out to Mr. Lockhart, who insisted on retaining his statement of the affair, and attempted to attribute the failure of the hunt to other causes, in what seems an ill-natured manner, naming Sir Walter Scott's opposition to Catholic emancipation as one cause. This letter follows: —

[Miss Edgeworth's Last Letter to Mrs. S. C. Hall about Sir Walter Scott's Visit to Ireland.]

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, June 18, 1843.

My sister, Harriet Butler, and I were in the boat with Sir Walter Scott the day, and the only day, when he was on the Killarney Lakes. We heard him declare that he thought the Upper Lake the most beautiful he had ever seen excepting Loch Lomond: more could not by mortal tongue be expressed by a Scotsman. I did not hear him

find fault, or say that he was disappointed, during the whole row. He appeared pleased and pleasing; and why any people should have imagined he was not, I cannot imagine. "Rude," I am sure he was not: he could not be. We were sorry that we could not stay another day; but all experienced travellers know full well that they must give up their wishes to previous arrangements and engagements, and that they must cut their plans and pleasures according to their time and promises. As to the affair of the stag-hunt, I can only say that *I* received no invitation to see one; that *we* did not receive any; that I heard at the time that a stag-hunt would not be offered to us, because the stag-hounds belonged to some near relation of a gentleman much respected in the country, who had just died suddenly, and was not buried. I recollect passing by the gates of his place, and seeing two men in deep mourning, with weepers, sitting on each side of the gate. As I had never before seen this custom, I made inquiry, and was told why they mourned, and who for; and this confirmed and fixed in memory what I have above mentioned.

Mrs. Hall adds the following note from Mrs. Butler: —

Dear Mrs. Hall, — My recollection of the circumstances mentioned by my sister at Killarney, in 1825, exactly coincides with hers: I remember our being told, as we drove into Killarney, that we should have no stag-hunt, as the master of the hounds had died that morning.

Yours truly,

Harriet Butler.

Trim, 19th June, 1843.

The party was joined by William Edgeworth, who was then laying out the road to Glengariff: he met them at Tralee, and told them that this hunt was put off, and the reason for its delay.

The trip to Killarney was unmarred by any thing that could detract from the pleasure of Miss Edgeworth's distinguished friend Sir Walter, for he was too large-hearted, too generous, to consider himself likely to be slighted; and the fact of seeing the mourners sitting at the gate of the dead man's house was conclusive evidence to all but Mr. Lockhart. They returned direct from Killarney to Dublin, and went to the house of Capt. Scott in St. Stephen's Green. The 15th of August was Scott's birthday; and his health was drunk with much feeling, — more tenderness than gayety, perhaps, for the approaching separation of the friends cast a shadow on this occasion. Maria and he took an affectionate farewell, which was, as it proved, a final one.

Miss Edgeworth was soon at home again, and was settling down to her usual manner of life. She wrote to a friend, —

"Your observations about the difficulties of 'Take for Granted' are excellent. I 'take for granted' I shall be able to conquer them. If only one instance were taken, the whole story must turn upon that, and be constructed to bear on one point; and that *pointing* to the moral would not appear natural. As Sir Walter said to me, in reply to my observing it is difficult to introduce the moral without displeasing the reader, 'The rats won't go into the trap if they smell the hand of the rat-catcher.'"

Sir Walter Scott wrote the following letter after his return to Scotland: —

[To Miss Joanna Baillie, Hampstead.]

ABBOTSFORD, Oct. 12, 1825.

. . . I well intended to have written from Ireland; but, alas! hell, as some stern old divine says, is paved with good intentions. There was such a whirl of visiting and laking and boating and wondering and shouting and laughing and carousing; so much to be seen, and so little time to see it; so much to be heard, and only two ears to listen to twenty voices, — that, upon the whole, I grew desperate, and gave up all thoughts of doing what was right and proper upon post-days. And so all my epistolary good intentions are gone to macadamize, I suppose, "the burning marl" of the infernal regions. I have not the pen of our friend Maria Edgeworth, who writes all the while she laughs, talks, eats, and drinks; and I believe, though I do not pretend to be so far in the secret, all the time she sleeps too. She has good luck in having a pen which walks at once so unweariedly and so well. I do not, however, quite like her last book on "Education," considered as a general work. She should have limited the title to "Education in Natural Philosophy," or some such term; for there is no great use in teaching children in general to roof houses, or build bridges, which, after all, a carpenter or a mason does a great deal better at two shillings sixpence per day. In a waste country, like some parts of America, it may do very well, or perhaps for a sailor or a traveller, certainly for a civil engineer. But in the ordinary professions of the better-informed orders, I have always observed that a small taste for mechanics tends to encouraging a sort of trifling self-conceit, founded on knowing that which is

not worth being known by one who has other matters to employ his mind on, and, in short, forms a trumpery gimcrack kind of a character, who is a mechanic among gentlemen, and most probably a gentleman among mechanics. You must understand I mean only to challenge the system as making mechanics too much and too general a subject of education, and converting scholars into makers of toys. Men like Watt, or whose genius tends strongly to invent and execute those wonderful combinations which extend in such an incalculable degree the human force and command over the physical world, do not come within ordinary rules; but your ordinary Harry should be kept to his grammar, and your Lucy of most common occurrence will be best employed on her sampler, instead of wasting wood, and cutting their fingers, which I am convinced they did, though their historian says nothing of it.

Well, but I did not mean to say any thing about Harry and Lucy, whose dialogues are very interesting after all; but about Ireland, which I could prophesy for as well as if I were Thomas the Rhymer. Her natural gifts are so great, that, despite all the disadvantages which have hitherto retarded her progress, she will, I believe, be queen of the trefoil of kingdoms. I never saw a richer country, or to speak my mind, a finer people: the worst of them is the bitter and envenomed dislike which they have to each other. . . . Then we had beautiful lakes, "those vast inland seas" as Spenser terms them; and hills which they call mountains; and dargles and dingles; and most superb ruins of castles and abbeys; and live nuns in strict retreat, not permitted to speak, but who read their breviaries with one eye, and looked at their visitors with the other. Then we had Miss Edgeworth, and the kind-natured, clever Harriet, who moved and thought and

acted for everybody's comfort rather than her own; we had Lockhart to say clever things, and Walter, with his whiskers, to overawe obstinate postilions and impudent beggars; and Jane to bless herself that the folks had neither houses, clothes, nor furniture; and Anne to make fun from morning to night, —

"And merry folks were we!"

. . . I beg kind respects to dear Mrs. Agnes and to Mrs. Baillie. Lady Scott and Anne send best respects. I have but room to say that I am always yours,

WALTER SCOTT.

The names of Scott and Miss Edgeworth will long be connected by those who read of their friendship and mutual regard. Chief-Justice Story, in a Phi Beta Kappa address at Cambridge, Mass., in 1822, said of this warm friendship and pleasant literary fellowship, —

"Who does not contemplate with enthusiasm the matchless wit, the inexhaustible conversations, the fine character painting, the practical instruction of Miss Edgeworth, THE GREAT KNOWN, standing in her own department, by the side of THE GREAT UNKNOWN?"

The year 1826 was marked by commercial difficulties, and the state of the money-market distressed many of the Irish landlords. Miss Edgeworth gave up the charge of the estate, and the management of the rents, at her father's death; and Lovell Edgeworth, the heir, took the affairs into his own hands. Miss Edgeworth again undertook the care of the business of the estate, and enabled her brother by

her tact, skill, and long acquaintance with such matters to weather the storm. She wrote in the following year, April, 1827: —

"I am quite well, and in high good humor and spirits, in consequence of having received the whole of Lovell's half-year's rents in full, with pleasure to the tenants, and without the least fatigue or anxiety to myself."

She received in the year 1826 an admirable translation of "Harry and Lucy," by her Parisian friend, Mme. Belloc. In the same year her witty essay on "Bores" appeared in a very stupid annual, named "Janus," and was quite lost in its dull pages.

The death of Lady Scott recalled to Miss Edgeworth the kindly welcome given her by that lady in Edinburgh and at Abbotsford. She said of her, —

"She was a most kind-hearted, hospitable person, and had much more sense, and more knowledge of character, and discrimination, than many of those who ridiculed her."

In July Sir Humphry Davy visited Edgeworthstown. He was then president of the Royal Society, and at the height of his fame and prosperity. Maria said, —

"Travelling, and his increased acquaintance with the world, has enlarged the *range*, without lowering the *pitch*, of Sir Humphry's mind."

She borrowed this allusion from Sir John Sebright's very entertaining essay on taming hawks, which he sent her. She added, —

"There is at this moment a gentleman in Ireland, near Belfast, who trains hawks and goes a-hawking, — a Mr. Sinclair."

Some time after this, when Miss Edgeworth was preparing to write her "Helen," this essay must have recurred to her memory, for she made a hawking scene a very pretty chapter in that novel; and the hawk is quite an important actor in the sketch of Beauclerc's character.

Sir Humphry repeated to Miss Edgeworth a remarkable criticism of Bonaparte's on Talma's acting: "You don't play Nero well: you gesticulate too much; you speak with too much vehemence. A despot does not need all that: he need only *pronounce. Il sait qu'il se suffit;*" and, added Talma, who told this to Sir Humphry, "Bonaparte, as he said this, folded his arms, in his well-known manner, and stood as if his attitude expressed the sentiment."

In August, Harriet Edgeworth married the Rev. Mr. Butler, rector of Trim. In September of this year Miss Edgeworth made a visit of four months to Black Castle. She enjoyed the following joke by Lord Longford, who was something of a wag. When a friend was going from Edgeworthstown to Pakenham Hall, Lord Longford, as was customary, was to send for her to the float or ferry where they crossed the river to Longford. Instead of sending horses, his lordship sent a pair of bullocks; the servant remarking, "'My lord had not another beast to spare for you' — my lord being behind the hedge to enjoy her look of astonishment and dismay."

When Capt. Basil Hall was publishing his account of the Loochoo Islands, in 1818, he sent a copy of it to Miss Edgeworth by Mrs. Marcet, to whom he wrote: —

"I have put 'To Miss Edgeworth' in the titlepage, as my offering; which is like a common sailor scratching his name on Nelson's pillar."

In 1823 he became personally acquainted with Miss Edgeworth, being introduced to her at Sir Walter Scott's, in Scotland. This was the beginning of a most agreeable friendship, and a long correspondence, broken only by Capt. Hall's death.

When he was going to America, Miss Edgeworth gave him letters to friends there, among them, Mrs. Lazarus of Wilmington, formerly Miss Mordecai of Richmond, who had urged Miss Edgeworth to write a story containing a good Jew, and reproached her with reviling the race.

In 1827 Miss Edgeworth began a practice of taking early walks. For many years she followed this custom of rising at seven o'clock in the morning, to walk for three-quarters of an hour. A lady who lived in the village said her maid used to wake her in the morning, saying, "Miss Edgeworth's walking, ma'am: it's eight o'clock." In September Mr. Herschel made a flying visit to Miss Edgeworth. Miss Edgeworth received a visit from an American lady, who brought her a note from Sir Philip Crampton. She was accompanied by her brothers and the son of Mrs. Grant of Laggan, celebrated by her Scotch sketches. She found Miss Douglas a very pleasing

person, something of a "mixture of American and Scotch in her whole appearance; an interesting, sincere, generous, and uncommon person."

"The Literary Gazette" of this year made an announcement that Miss Edgeworth "was far advanced in a novel called 'Take for Granted.'" Miss Edgeworth could not guess by whom this statement was circulated. It was not designed for any thing but a short tale, and she never completed it. During the spring of 1828, she wrote a story called "Garry Owen," of about fifty printed pages, for Mr. Lockhart's "young friend Mr. Croker's 'Christmas Box,'" a little annual published in 1829.

Miss Anna Edgeworth, a distant relation, died in London in 1828, and bequeathed to Miss Edgeworth a pair of diamond earrings and pearl bracelets. With the proceeds of the sale of these jewels, Miss Edgeworth built a market-house in the village, and a room over it for the magistrate's petty sessions.

The house at Edgeworthstown caught fire; and, by the exertions of the tenants and villagers, it was speedily put out after moderate damage, but causing much alarm and confusion. Maria was touched by the devotion shown there in this danger. "The zeal, the sense, the generosity, the courage, of the people," she wrote, "is beyond any thing I can describe: I can only feel it."

The Ruxtons made a foreign tour; and, on their return to Ireland, the son who took the name of Fitzherbert at his father's death, in 1825, lived at Black Castle, and Mrs. Ruxton and her daughters went to reside at Bloomfield, near Dublin. There

Maria visited them in the spring of 1828. Fanny Edgeworth married Mr. Le Stock Wilson in this year, and went to live in London.

Capt. Hall, who had sent Miss Edgeworth his journal of his social experiences in Great Britain, now sent her his journals kept during his American journeys, and some of Mrs. Hall's letters to her family. She enjoyed them. Her letters of criticism, advice, and praise were excellent, and valued by Capt. Hall. At the end of one of them, she says she hopes Mrs. Hall will not be exhausted by it; and she ends it by "My dear Basil, keep on your own way up the hill, and never turn to listen to the black stones, even though one of them calls to you with the voice of *that* Maria Edgeworth."

The introduction to the new edition of Scott's works was seen by Capt. Hall while it was passing through the press: as she was named in it, he sent her the sheets where the mention was made of her. She wrote, —

"It was very good of Capt. Hall to think of sending me these sheets. Sir Walter Scott has, in the most delightful and kind manner, said every thing that could gratify me as an author, friend, and human creature."

Mrs. Ruxton said of this tribute paid her niece by Scott, she would forgive Sir Walter "whatever fault he may commit in his next novel, and for the rest of his life, for this charming passage." In writing her thanks to Capt. Hall, Maria said, —

"If I could, as you say, flatter myself that Sir Walter Scott was in any degree influenced to write and publish

his novels from seeing my sketches of Irish characters, I should, indeed, triumph in the 'thought of having been the proximate cause of such happiness to millions.'"

In Sir Walter Scott's general introduction to the Waverley novels, dated Abbotsford, Jan. 1, 1829, he says, in alluding to the missing manuscript which became "Waverley," —

"Two circumstances, in particular, recalled my recollection of the mislaid manuscript. The first was the extended and well-merited fame of Miss Edgeworth, whose Irish characters have gone so far to make the English familiar with the character of their gay and kind-hearted neighbors of Ireland, that she may be truly said to have done more towards completing the union than perhaps all the legislative enactments by which it has been followed up.

"Without being so presumptuous as to hope to emulate the rich humor, pathetic tenderness, and admirable tact, which pervade the works of my accomplished friend, I felt that something might be attempted for my own country, of the same kind with that which Miss Edgeworth so fortunately achieved for Ireland; something which might introduce her natives to those of the sister kingdom in a more favorable light than they had been placed hitherto, and tend to produce sympathy for their virtues, and indulgence for their foibles."

The saying of Mme. de Staël, "On dépose fleur à fleur la couronne de la vie," came vividly home to Miss Edgeworth, as year by year some chosen friend or dear relation was called from earth. The penalty of long life was hers. Her brother, William Edgeworth, the talented engineer, succumbed to the

malady of the Sneyds, his mother's family. He died, after a short illness, in 1829.

During this year Miss Edgeworth had the pleasure of meeting the poet Wordsworth. She enjoyed his conversation; but, as she was not feeling at all well, had to content herself with seeing less of him than pleased, though perhaps "as much as good for her" under the existing circumstances.

The year 1830 was one of distress for Ireland; and in May, Maria was busy "with ditches, drains, and sewers," to give employment to the poor, and letting houses, and farming; combining with these practical and necessary occupations "thinking three hours a day of 'Helen:' to what purpose I dare not say," she added. July found her writing of the condition of affairs.

"The people about us are now in great distress, having neither work nor food; and we are going to buy meat to distribute at half-price."

In November Mrs. Ruxton died; another very grievous blow to her niece, who loved her with devotion. After her father's death, she turned with still stronger feeling to her as one who had always had a large share of her thoughts and regard.

When Mrs. S. C. Hall published her first book in 1829, "Sketches of Irish Character," she received the following words of kindly encouragement and appreciation from Miss Edgeworth: —

"It has been sometimes my fate to have gratitude and sincerity struggling within me when I have begun a letter of thanks to authors: I have no such struggle now; but

with pleasure unmixed, and perfect freedom of mind and ease of conscience, I write to *you*. 'The Sketches of Irish Character' are, in my opinion, admirable for truth, pathos, and humor: *all* the sketches show complete knowledge of the persons and things represented; and some of the portraits are drawn with uncommon strength, and with more decided and *fine* touches, which mark a masterly hand."

In the year 1830 Miss Edgeworth revisited her friends in England. She spent some time with her brother Sneyd at Brandford, near Goudhurst in Kent, and saw the Lansdownes often when she was in London. In December she was at Lansdowne House; and in conversation Lord Lansdowne told her an instance of Louis Philippe's "*présence d'esprit:* a mob surrounded him, 'Que désirez-vous, messieurs?'—'Nous désirons Napoléon.'—'Eh bien! allez donc le trouver.'" The mob laughed, cheered, and dispersed.

She "saw Talleyrand at Lansdowne House, like a corpse, with his hair dressed *aîles de pigeon bien poudré.* As Lord Lansdowne drolly said, 'How much these *aîles de pigeon* have gone through unchanged! How many revolutions have they seen! How many changes of their master's mind!' Talleyrand has less countenance than any man of talents I ever saw: he seems to think, not only that 'la parole était donné à l'homme pour déguiser sa pensée,' but that expression of countenance was given him as a curse to betray his emotions: therefore he has exerted all his abilities to conquer all expression, and to throw

into his face that 'no meaning' which puzzles more than wit, but I heard none."

Mrs. Somerville, in her "Recollections," says, —

"Maria Edgeworth came frequently to see us when she was in England. She was one of my most intimate friends, warm-hearted and kind, a charming companion, with all the liveliness and originality of an Irishwoman. For seventeen years I was in constant correspondence with her. The cleverness and animation, as well as affection, of her letters, I cannot express: certainly women are superior to men in letter-writing."

Moore wrote in his diary of April, 1831, —

"While at breakfast, received a note from Rogers to remind me that I had promised to breakfast with him. Went, and found Miss Edgeworth, Luttrell, Lord Normanby (now Mulgrave), and Sharpe. Miss Edgeworth, with all her cleverness, any thing but agreeable. The moment any one begins to speak, off she starts too, seldom more than a sentence behind them, and in general continues to distance every speaker. Neither does what she says, though of course very sensible, at all make up for this over-activity of tongue."

This rather comical complaint of Moore reminds one of the saying Smollett put into the mouth of *Bramble* in "Humphrey Clinker," "One wit in a company, like a knuckle of ham in soup, gives flavor: but two are too many." Vanity and self-love were probably at the bottom of Moore's annoyance. The lady was the greater star.

The Carrs and Joanna Baillie cordially welcomed her to Hampstead. She wrote of this meeting: —

"It is always gratifying to find old friends the same after long absence; but it has been particularly so to me now, when not only the leaves of the pleasures of life fall naturally into its winter, but when great branches on whom happiness depended are gone."

Joanna Baillie had a pleasant anecdote to tell Maria of Lord Dudley and Ward, who wrote to Sir Walter Scott offering to take on himself the amount of Scott's debts, and be paid by instalments as might suit him.

Miss Edgeworth visited her sister, Mrs. Wilson, who was living in London. While she was seeing her literary friends, and renewing her old friendships, a message was sent her by the Duchess of Wellington; who asked her to come to see her, if she would please an old friend, Kitty Pakenham, who remembered the many happy days spent at Edgeworthstown. She found her very ill in a magnificent room at Apsley House; not magnificent from its size, height, length, or breadth, but from its contents, — the presents of cities, kingdoms, and sovereigns.

"Opposite her couch hung the gold shield in imitation of the shield of Achilles, — with all the duke's victories embossed on the margin, the duke and his staff in the centre, surrounded with blazing rays, — given by the city of London. On either side, the great candelabras belonging to the massive plateau given by Portugal, which cannot be lifted without machinery. At either end, in deep and tall glass cases, from top to bottom ranged the services of Dresden and German china, presented by the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia. While I looked at these, the duchess, raising herself quite up,

exclaimed with weak-voiced, strong-souled enthusiasm, 'All tributes to merit! there's the value, all pure, no corruption suspected even. Even of the Duke of Marlborough, that could not be said so truly.' The fresh, untired enthusiasm she feels for his character, for her own still youthful imagination of her hero, after all she has gone through, is most touching. There she is fading away, still feeding, when she can feed on nothing else, on his glories, on the perfume of his incense."

After a delightful breakfast in February with the Mackintoshes, at which Sir James was most brilliant, Miss Edgeworth said she felt as she supposed "dram-drinkers do after their 'morning.' Oh! what it is to come within the radiance of genius," she adds, quoting from a remark of her sister, Anna Beddoes, on Dr. Beddoes's death.

At the Herschells', at Slough, Miss Edgeworth met a lady who interested her very much by reminiscences of Sir Joshua Reynolds. Mrs. Gwatkin was the niece of Sir Joshua, and exceedingly attached to him, and "indignant at the idea of his not having written the 'Discourses.' Burke or Johnson, indeed! No such thing. He wrote them himself. I am evidence. He used to employ me as his secretary."

She saw at Mrs. Gwatkin's house, the next day, the original of Sir Joshua's "Simplicity," who has now flowers in her lap, in consequence of the observation of a foolish woman, who, looking at the picture as it was originally painted, with the child's hands interlaced, with the backs of the hands turned up, exclaimed "How beautiful! How natural the dish of

prawns the dear little thing has in her lap!" Sir Joshua threw the flowers over the prawns. He painted Mrs. Gwatkin seven times: "But don't be vain, my dear. I only use your head as I would that of any beggar, — as a good practice." Mrs. Gwatkin, though very deaf, like her uncle, was still a pretty woman.

Miss Edgeworth saw Knowle before she returned to London. She enjoyed the lovely old place, saying, "I never saw a house and place that pleased me more."

After her return from this country excursion, she went to see the Duchess of Wellington, but learned that her cousin was dead, — had been dead two days. The duke was "*beside her*," she learned, at her death; and "a lock of hair was brought her by the devoted maid of the duchess, — all left of the beautiful Kitty Pakenham. So ended that sweet, innocent — shall we say happy, or unhappy? — life." She adds, "Happy, I should think, through all: happy in her good feelings and good conscience and warm affections, still *loving* on; happy in her faith, her hope, and her charity." This death made a deep impression on Miss Edgeworth.

After another visit at Hampstead, where she heard Miss Ferrier's novel of "Destiny" read by Isabella Carr, she went home in August from "universal London," after a successful and agreeable visit. Miss Edgeworth thoroughly enjoyed London.

The freshness with which Miss Edgeworth enjoyed the pleasures of life cannot fail to charm the observer. She took life very philosophically, — the mingled good and evil which must come to all alike.

Undoubtedly she had a peculiarly happy temperament; for great gifts, worldly prosperity, and happiness do not always bring such contentment as hers. She had nothing of that morbid striving after effect too often seen among literary people. A flower, a happy quotation, a beautiful scene, all contributed to her enjoyment. She drew pleasure from the simple incidents of a life well and usefully spent.

An old Scotchman, Sir Harry Moncrief, used to say, that no man, long accustomed to city life, could retire and live in the country and muse "for six months, without becoming an idiot." Country life, spent as Miss Edgeworth passed her time, with the occasional breaks of visits to friends, London society, Continental tours, was what gave her the needed time for perfection of thought and study. It gave her, also, the keen enjoyment of life's pleasures which enabled her to say in her sixty-fourth year, in 1831, though losing every year some valued friend, and naturally sensible herself of the approach of age, —

> "Old as I am, and unimaginative as I am thought to be, I have really always found, that the pleasures I have expected would be great have actually been greater in my enjoyment than in anticipation."

The rest of the year 1831 was quietly spent at home, with the exception of a visit made in October to the Misses Ruxton, at Rosstrevor. Francis Edgeworth was married in December to Miss Eroles, who was cordially welcomed by Maria as a new sister.

In April, 1832, Miss Edgeworth was again at work

on "Helen." Churchill in the book was originally called "Townsend." To show how widely she drew her plan, she read Mirabeau for this character, as she wished to exemplify in his peculiarities "the stealing wit and ideas in conversation."

In Darwin's first interlude to the "Botanic Garden," he said, "You may pluck the wild-flowers in the field of literature, but you must not gather the cultivated fruit in your neighbor's gardens;" and this striking thought, which was *apropos* of plagiarism, and the instances of resemblances in thought and expression, caused her to write in her notes for "Helen:" —

"Some, indeed, add murder to robbery, like Voltaire with Shakspeare. Some, standing upon the mines, call out, 'No mines here!' and depreciate that they may appropriate. Some claim possession by right of improvement, and others take without even the form of claiming, like Mirabeau, 'Il y a longtemps que j'ai dit.' Some drag the barbarian gold from the savage's ears. End with examining whether time does, or does not, do justice at last, in fairly apportioning moral or literary fame."

These notes took definite shape and form in the description of Churchill, in "Helen," where she wrote of him: —

"Persons without a name, Horace treated as barbarians who did not know the value of their gold; and he seemed to think, that, if they chanced to possess rings and jewels, they might be plucked from them without remorse, and converted to better use by some lucky civilized adventurer. Yet in his most successful piracies he was always haunted

by the fear of discovery, and he especially dreaded the acute perception of Lady Davenant."

The following letter from Miss Edgeworth to Mrs. Somerville, thanking her for her gift of a copy of her last work, "The Preliminary Dissertation," or "The Physical Sciences," will interest from its modest admiration of the great talents of her friend.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, May 31, 1832.

MY DEAR MRS. SOMERVILLE, — There is one satisfaction at least in giving knowledge to the ignorant, to those who know their ignorance at least, — that they are grateful and humble. You should have my grateful and humble thanks long ago for the favor, the honor, you did me by sending me that "Preliminary Dissertation," in which there is so much knowledge, but that I really wished to read it over and over again at some intervals of time, and to have the pleasure of seeing my sister Harriet read it, before I should write to you. She has come to us, and has just been enjoying it, as I knew she would. For my part, I was long in the state of the boa-constrictor after a full meal; and I am but just recovering the powers of motion. My mind was so distended by the magnitude, the immensity, of what you put into it. I am afraid, that, if you had been aware how ignorant I was, you would not have sent me this dissertation; because you would have felt that you were throwing away much that I could not understand, and that could be better bestowed on scientific friends, capable of judging of what they admire. I can only assure you that you have given me a great deal of pleasure; that you have enlarged my conception of the sublimity of the universe, beyond any ideas I had ever before been enabled to form.

The great simplicity of your manner of writing, I may say of your *mind*, which appears in your writing, particularly suits the scientific sublime, which would be destroyed by what is commonly called fine writing. You trust sufficiently to the natural interest of your subject, to the importance of the facts, the beauty of the whole, and the adaptation of the means to the ends, in every part of the immense whole. This reliance upon your reader's feeling along with you was to me very gratifying. The ornaments of eloquence dressing out a sublime subject are just so many proofs either of bad taste in the orator, or of distrust and contempt of the taste of those whom he is trying thus to captivate.

I suppose nobody yet has completely *mastered* the tides, therefore I may well content myself with my inability to comprehend what relates to them. But, instead of plaguing you with an endless enumeration of my difficulties, I had better tell you some of the passages which gave me, ignoramus as I am, peculiar pleasure. . . . I am afraid I shall transcribe your whole book if I go on to tell you all that has struck me; and you would not thank me for that, — you who have so little vanity, and so much to do better with your time than to read *my* ignorant admiration. But pray let me mention to you a few of the passages that amused my imagination particularly; viz., 1st, the inhabitant of Pallas *going round* his world — or who might go — in five or six hours in one of our steam-carriages; 2d, the moderate-sized man who would weigh two tons at the surface of the sun, and who would weigh only a few pounds at the surface of the four new planets, and would be so light as to find it impossible to stand from the excess of muscular force. I think a very entertaining dream might be made of a man's visit to the sun and planets. These ideas are all like dreamy feelings when one is a lit-

tle feverish. I forgot to mention (page 58) a passage on the propagation of sound. It is a beautiful sentence, as well as a sublime idea: "so that at a very small height above the surface of the earth, the noise of the tempest ceases; and the thunder is heard no more in those boundless regions, where the heavenly bodies accomplish their periods in eternal and sublime silence."

Excuse me in my trade of sentence-monger, and believe me, dear Mrs. Somerville, truly your obliged and truly your affectionate friend,

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

I have persuaded your dear curly-headed friend Harriet to add her own observations. She sends her love to you; and I know you love her, otherwise I would not press her to write her own say.

In September of 1832 Miss Edgeworth made an excursion to Pakenham Hall, a place she always enjoyed visiting very much.

In November Miss Edgeworth wrote Mr. Bannatyne of the death of Sir Walter Scott: —

"The death of Sir Walter Scott has filled us all, as his private friends and admirers, with sorrow. I do not mean that we would have wished the prolongation of his life such as it had been for the last months: quite the contrary. But we feel poignant anguish from the thought that such a life as his was prematurely shortened; that such faculties, such a genius — such as is granted but once in an age, once in many ages — should have been extinguished of its light, of its power to enlighten and vivify the world, long before its natural term for setting! Whatever the errors may have been, oh, what have been the unremitted, generous, alas! overstrained exertions of that noble nature!"

Sir Walter to the very last paid the most generous tributes of praise and affectionate admiration to Maria. At Malta he told Mrs. John Davy, — the daughter of Mrs. Fletcher of Edinburgh, who married the brother of Sir Humphry Davy, — as they drove together, something of his fancies about books, adding, —

"'And there's that Irish lady too, — but I forget everybody's name now.' — 'Miss Edgeworth,' I said. — 'Ay, Miss Edgeworth: she's very clever, and best in the little touches too. I'm sure, in that children's story [he meant 'Simple Susan'], where the little girl parts with her lamb, and the little boy brings it back to her again, there's nothing for it but just to put down the book, and cry.'"

When Mr. Lockhart was preparing his "Life of Scott," he asked Miss Edgeworth for Sir Walter's letters to herself. She had a great dislike to the publication of a private and friendly correspondence in any case; but with these letters she felt, as she expressed herself to a correspondent, that they had too much of what was merely personal to allow her to print them. She said she had "refused to give him Scott's letters for publication, and very painful it was to me to refuse him, at present, any thing he asked; but principle and consistency, painful or not, required it, besides my own feelings. I could not bear to publish Sir Walter's praises of myself, and affectionate expressions and private sentiments. I did send one letter to Mr. Lockhart, exemplifying what I mean, — the beautiful letter on his changing fortunes."

CHAPTER XIX.

"Helen."—Maria still at Work on this Book.—Encouragement from Friends.—"Helen" finished.—Received with great Interest by the Public.—Remarks on "Helen."—Sir Culling Smith.—Maria's visit to Connemara.—Letter from Col. Stewart.—Answers Mrs. Stark.—"Dublin University Magazine."

In 1832 Miss Edgeworth was hard at work at "Helen," which was approaching completion. Her only "*complaint*" was that she could never do in any day as much as she intended, she said at this time. She sorely needed encouragement and urging when she first undertook this work, and as early as 1830 wrote to one of her sisters that she had given her "new life and spirit to go on with her" (Helen).

Miss Edgeworth had so long accustomed herself to depending upon her father's judgment and criticism, that she dreaded the attempt she was urged by her friends to make alone and unaided. She finished the plan her father had laid out for "Rosamond," "Frank," and "Harry and Lucy," but for many years the thought of writing a novel which should challenge comparison with "Belinda" or "Patronage" seemed an impossibility. But the success with which her sequel to the "Early Lessons" was received gave her the desire to begin a larger work. As she sat at her fancy-work or sewing, took her walks, or drove, she began to think of

a story, and made notes for it. Unfortunately, that very lack of capacity for framing a plot, which Lord Dudley considered her weak point, hampered her very much in preparing "Helen." She began to write this novel without making the complete sketch of the story, and went on altering the plot as she wrote, which somewhat injured the completeness of the tale. Then, too, this method of writing was rather disheartening; for she wasted time in altering where she should have been actively proceeding with her story. In 1832 she compared herself to an old lamp at the point of extinction from exhaustion, when some friendly hand pours fresh oil upon it, on receiving a letter urging her to continue her story. Mr. and Mrs. Butler were deeply interested in "Helen;" and, finally, their confidence in her powers so inspired her that she bent all her efforts to make "Helen" a perfect piece of work. This book was started in 1830; but the constant interruptions to which she was always liable, and which she permitted to break up her time too much, made her delay it. Then the very doubts with which she wrote gave her less desire to concentrate her energy; but finally, in spite of family affairs, the agency of her brother's business, visits from friends, and to England and among Irish friends, she became interested in her heroine's fate, and resolutely carried "Helen" to a successful end of her difficulties. In February, 1833, she wrote a friend: —

"I am afraid you will be tired of 'Helen' before you become acquainted with her."

She was then eagerly at work on it. In May she wrote of it again: —

"I must tell you a curious instance of my wondrous good luck, or rather of the wonderful kindness and good-nature of people to a spoiled authoress. The very morning that I heard from you about the hawking-scene, I received a huge letter in an old hand I had never seen before, a folio sheet and a half, giving me an account of the hawking-scenes the writer had witnessed at Lord Berners's, signed Elizabeth Wilson (sister to the present Lord Berners), Kirby Cave, Norfolk."

The agency business often referred to may seem to have been a waste of time and energy; but it gave Miss Edgeworth an interest in the poor people of the village, induced her to take more active walking exercise than she would otherwise have done, and unbent her mind, by giving her complete change of thought, and a practical object to relieve her imagination. She went with renewed energy and life from her accounts and practical affairs to the manuscript of "Helen." She never wrote with more spirit than when she had been engaged with the realities of life.

In speaking of low spirits and their cause, about the time she was writing "Helen," Miss Edgeworth gave as her opinion that the best cure for depression of mind was to struggle against it by work, quoting Bacon, who said, "To keep the mind in health, you must every day do something to which the mind is best, and something to which it is least disposed, so as to work out the knots and stones of the mind."

When "Helen" was done, it was read to the family, who felt a deep interest in it. Miss Mary Sneyd, the critic and corrector of proofs to many of Miss Edgeworth's works, was deeply touched by this story; and the noble and very impressive end brought tears to the eyes of the listeners. The book was finished in the summer of 1833; and the manuscript was sent to Mr. Lockhart, who kindly undertook to negotiate with Bentley about its publication. Miss Edgeworth left the business arrangements for it entirely to the judgment of Mr. Lockhart.

Mme. Belloc, who had translated "Harry and Lucy" and "Early Lessons" most acceptably, gladly received the offer of advance sheets of "Helen," and made an excellent translation of this book. Miss Edgeworth wrote of "Helen:" —

"I should tell you beforehand, that there is no humor in it, and no Irish character. It is impossible to draw Ireland as she now is, in a book of fiction. Realities are too strong, party passions too violent, to bear to see, or care to look at, their faces in the looking-glass. The people would only break the glass, and curse the fool who held the mirror up to nature, — distorted nature in a fever. We are in too perilous a case to laugh. Humor would be out of season, worse than bad taste. Whenever the danger is past, as the man in the sonnet says, —

'We may look back on the hardest part, and laugh.'

"Then I shall be ready to join in the laugh. Sir Walter Scott once said to me, 'Do explain to the public why Pat, who gets forward so well in other countries, is so miserable in his own.' A very difficult question, I fear

above my power. But I shall think continually, and listen and look and read."

The humor of Miss Edgeworth, a very remarkable attribute in a woman, was repressed in "Helen." She dared not laugh at Ireland. Cervantes "laughed Spain's chivalry away," said a writer, of "Don Quixote;" and if laughing at the Irish could have cured them of their follies, errors, and improvidence, Miss Edgeworth had certainly done her best in her previous works. "Helen" shows some defects in the construction of its plot, but none in the execution of the details. There is an ease, lightness of touch, a certain air about it, which makes it as interesting as any of her novels, and far more agreeable than those which are weighted with so much effort to work out a moral. "Helen" is not wanting in a high tone; and the manner in which the untruthfulness of a society life is depicted, and the distress and suffering caused by one who evades or denies a fact, and makes an innocent friend the victim of a mistake of her own, is very interesting, and a valuable study. The character of Lady Davenant is one of great power, and shows the versatility, the grasp, of Miss Edgeworth's pen. The conversation of Lady Davenant in the pony-carriage with her young friend Helen is full of life and natural spirit. There is a reality and depth in this picture which will impress it strongly on the mind of the reader. There are among Miss Edgeworth's writings many fine pictures of women. She drew an Englishwoman of culture and high birth as finely as written words

could describe the niceties of character. Who can forget a Mrs. Hungerford, Lady Delacour, Lady Davenant, Belinda, Caroline Percy, Helen, or Lady Cecilia Clarendon? Her Mme. de Fleury, Emilie de Coulanges, and a host of minor characters, have made women of other nations as famous as her own. None exceed in delicacy of touch, depth of character, and a genuineness of nature the women of "Helen." The high-toned character of Lady Davenant, untouched by the great world in which she has been long a moving power; the charms, yet grave faults, of Lady Cecilia Clarendon; the honest, sincere, yet yielding, nature of Helen; the rugged and brusque bluntness of Miss Clarendon, — all move before us in the mimic world of Clarendon Park; and one feels as if, in laying down the book, a new set of friends had been added to his circle. The English reviews and magazines had good reviews of this novel. In America, among many, there was a very excellent one by the Rev. W. B. O. Peabody, well known as a fine critic and scholar.

Maria was much interested in reading the "Life of Mirabeau," and said: —

"I have been *excruciatingly* interested in the 'Memoirs of the Mirabeaus:' that *ouragan* son and that iron father and that good '*pâte d'homme le bailli.*'"

She was especially interested in the history of Mirabeau because of M. Dumont's connection with him, which was always a mystery to her: they were men so very different in mind and morals. Mirabeau, a selfish voluptuary, with great mental powers, which

occasionally gleam through a mist of sensuality, a master-mind, but degraded by low vices. Dumont, so pure-minded and single-hearted in his devotion to good, and spending his life in translating the code and essays of Jeremy Bentham, leaving only that as a monument to the future; unselfishly ignoring his own wit and originality to perpetuate the fame of another.

She embodies these views in "Helen," making one character say of Dumont's "Mémoires de Mirabeau," —

"This book, which I am reading, gives me infinitely increased pleasure from my certain knowledge, my perfect conviction, of the truth of the author. The self-evident nature of some of the facts would support themselves, you may say, in some instances; but my perceiving the scrupulous care he takes to say no more than what he knows to be true, my perfect reliance on the relater's private character for integrity, give a zest to every anecdote he tells, a specific weight to every word of conversation which he repeats, appropriate value to every trait of wit or humor characteristic of the person he describes."

Another book which she read for a study of character was the "Life of Savage;" and, in speaking of style and its effects, Maria once said she thought "Johnson's 'Life of Savage' the finest piece of biography I ever read, but the most dangerous; attributing his faults to his warmth of affection, telling of his ardent desire to catch his mother's shadow as she passed, when forbidden her presence, and certainly excusing his profligacy."

In answer to an inquiry about one of the characters in "Helen," she wrote, —

"Lady Davenant is not a portrait. I hope it may be called an invention of many ideas of individual characters in one new whole."

In 1833 Sir Culling and Lady Smith visited Ireland. Sir Culling, Maria described "as of old family, large fortune, and great philanthropy, extending to poor little Ireland, and her bogs, and her Connemara, and her penultimate barony of Ennis, and her ultimate Giant's Causeway, and her beautiful Lakes of Killarney." Lady Smith was Isabella Carr, daughter of the Edgeworths' old friends at Hampstead, a very charming woman. She had with her a nurse and infant. Maria was very anxious to see Connemara, and they were delighted to have her offer to go with them. An account of their journey would fill many pages. They went to Ballinasloe and Connemara early in October, leaving the child at Edgeworthstown. The adventures and difficulties they encountered were many, and culminated in the detention of the party for three weeks, for a severe illness of Lady Smith, at the house of Mr. Martin, Ballinahinch Castle. They saw cattle-fairs, bogs with treacherous, quaking holes, no roads worthy of the name, and finally, after their detention, got "safe out" of Connemara, seeing Ballymahon, Athlone, and Galway. Miss Edgeworth made the best of the disagreeables of the journey, and found a warm friend in Mrs. Martin; saying what "an extraordinary thing it was to have made a new friend at sixty-six years of age."

In speaking of Irish words and English expressions, she once said how much she always disliked the word "satiety;" because her father "laughed her to scorn, when she was thirteen, for pronouncing it 'sashaty'" in imitation of Mr. Day, with whom she had been visiting.

Sir Walter Scott, in passing Edgeworthstown this year, did not forget his friends there; for he saluted them with his regimental band before breakfast. And, speaking of the incident, Miss Edgeworth recalled the saying of the man to Bonaparte, "Sire, il n'y a de circonstance où on ne prend pas de déjeuner."

In writing in 1834, Miss Edgeworth alluded to a tale called "'Bob, the Chimney-Sweeper,' which was written several years before, but laid by for the present, unfinished;" and she probably never felt sufficient interest in it to take it up again.

Miss Edgeworth was much pleased with the advent of a new writer, Miss Murphy (Mrs. Jameson), now married to a very clever lawyer. She says "all the woes and heart-breakings are mere fables in the Diary." At this time Mrs. Jameson had not separated from her husband; and she was known by her "Female Characters of Shakspeare," and the "Diary of an Ennuyée."

Miss Edgeworth was much interested in meeting with a character of Chillingworth, which was so much like her "own first idea of Beauclerc's character (in 'Helen'), made incapable of decision or action by seeing too many arguments too nicely balanced on both sides of every question, that," she adds

she "could hardly help fancying" she "had stolen it."

After the publication of "Helen," which was received with much pleasure by the public, and kindly noticed by the critics, Miss Edgeworth had many letters of admiration, criticism, and comment from her friends.

Mrs. Stark, the friend of Miss Edgeworth, received a long letter of twenty-eight pages from her cousin, Col. Mathew Stewart, son of Dugald Stewart, who had been reading "Helen." Mrs. Stark wrote Miss Edgeworth about Col. Stewart's letter; and she asked her to let her read it, which she did. Miss Edgeworth said, —

"I am sure I have great reason to be proud, as I am, that such a person as Col. Stewart should have thought it worth his while to write all this."

And, after reading this letter carefully, she replied to Mrs. Stark in another long letter; which contains so much that is interesting to the reader in reference to her methods of work, and her modes of thought and study, that most of it is given here.

She says, after some preliminary remarks, —

"Such a writer, and such a noble mind as Col. Stewart's, having bestowed so much thought and time upon me and my fictions, raises them and myself in my own opinion far more than could the largest 'draught of unqualified praise' from any common critic. From feeling that he does justice in many points to the past, I rely upon his prophecies as to the future; and I feel my ambition strongly excited by his belief that I *can*, and his

prognostic that I shall, do better hereafter. Boileau says, 'Trust a critic who puts his finger at once upon what you know to be your infirm part.' I had often thought and said to myself some of those things which Col. Stewart has written, but never so strongly expressed, so fully brought home: my own rod of feathers did not do my business. I had often and often a suspicion that my manner was too Dutch, too minute, and very, very often, and warmly, admired the bold, graced style of the master hand and master genius. I *know* I feel how much *more is to be done*, *ought to be* done, by suggestion than by delineation, by creative fancy than by *fac-simile* copying; how much more by skilful selection and fresh, consistent combination, than can be effected by the most acute observation of individuals, or diligent accumulation of particulars.

"But where I have erred or fallen short of what is thought I might have done, it has not been from 'drawing from the life or from individuals, or from putting actions or sayings noted in commonplace books, from observation or hearsay in society.' I have seldom or ever drawn any one character — certainly not any ridiculous or faulty character — from any individual. Wherever, in writing, a real character rose to my view, from memory or resemblance, it has always been hurtful to me; because, to avoid that resemblance, I was tempted by cowardice or compelled by conscience to throw in differences, which often ended in making my character inconsistent, unreal."

"At the hazard of talking too much of myself, which people usually do when once they begin, I must tell my penetrating critic exactly the facts, as far as I know them, about my *habits of composition*. He will at least see, by my throwing open my mind thus, that he has not

made me afraid of him, but has won my confidence, and made me look for his future sympathy and assistance. I have no 'vast magazine of a commonplace book.' In my whole life, since I began to write, — which is now, I am concerned to state, upwards of forty years, — I have had only about half a dozen little note-books, strangely and irregularly kept, sometimes with only words of reference to some book or fact I could not bring accurately to mind. At first I was much urged by my father to note down remarkable traits of character, or incidents, which he thought might be introduced in stories; and he often blamed that idleness or laziness, as he thought it in me, which resisted his urgency. But I was averse to noting down, because I was conscious that it did better for me to keep the things in my head if they suited my purpose; and if they did not, they would only encumber me. I knew that when I wrote down I put the thing out of my care, out of my head; and that, though it might be put by very safe, I should not know where to look for it; that the labor of looking over a note-book would never do when I was in the warmth and pleasure of inventing; that I should never recollect the facts or ideas at the right time if I did not put them up in my own way, in my own head: that is, if I felt with hope or pleasure, 'that thought or that fact will be useful to me in such a character or story, of which I have now a first idea, the same fact or thought would recur, I knew, when I wanted it, in right order for invention.' In short, 'as Col. Stewart guessed,' the process of combination, generalization, invention, was carried on always in my head best. Wherever I brought in *bodily*, unaltered, as I have sometimes done, facts from real life, or sayings or recorded observations of my own, I have almost always found them objected to by good critics as unsuited to the character,

or in some way *de trop*. Two instances I remember at this instant, — two witticisms which were put into the mouth of Grace Nugent, in 'The Absentee,' first edition, and taken out in the second, from the conviction of their being inconsistent with her character. Sometimes, when the first idea of a character was taken from life, from some ORIGINAL, and the characteristic facts noted down, or even noted only in my head, I have found it necessary entirely to alter these; not only from propriety, to avoid individual resemblances, but from the sense that the character would be only an EXCEPTION to general feeling and experience, not a rule. (In short, exactly what Col. Stewart says about 'the conical hills' being the worst subjects for painters.) As an instance, I may mention King Corny, who is, I believe, considered more of a fairy piece, more as a *romantic* character, than my usual common-life Dutch figures: the *first idea* of him was taken from the facts I heard of an oddity, a man, I believe, like no other, who lived in a remote part of Ireland; an ingenious despot in his own family, who blasted out of the rock on which his house was built half a kitchen, while he and family and guests were living in the house; who was so passionate, that children, grown-up sons, servants, and all, ran out of the house at once when he fell into a passion with his own tangled hair; a man who used, in his impatience and rages, to call at the head of the kitchen stairs to his servants, 'Drop whatever you have in your hand, and come here and be d — d!' He was generous and kind-hearted, but despotic and conceited to the ludicrous degree; for instance, he thought he could work Gobelin tapestry, and play on the harp or mandolin, better than any one living.

"One after another, in working out King Corny, from the first wrong hint, I was obliged to give up every fact,

except that he propped up the roof of his house, and built downwards; and to generalize all, to make him a man of expedients, of ingenious substitutes, such as any clever Irishman in middle life is used to, I was obliged to retain, but soften, the despotism, and exalt the generosity, to make it a character that would interest. Not one word I ever heard said by the living man, or had ever heard repeated of his saying, except 'Drop what you have,' etc., went into my King Corny's mouth, — would not have suited him. I was obliged to make him according to the general standard of wit and acuteness, shrewd humor and sarcasm, of that class of *unread* natural geniuses; an over-match for Sir Ulick, who is of a more cultivated class of acute and roguish Irish gentlemen.

"Has Col. Stewart ever read 'Castle Rackrent'? I should like to know whether he would guess that any of the characters in that book were drawn from life, with what he calls colors from the life, or not. The only character drawn from the life in 'Castle Rackrent' is Thady himself, the teller of the story. He was an old steward (not very old, though, at that time: I added to his age, to allow him time for the generations of the family). I heard him when I first came to Ireland, and his dialect struck me, and his character; and I became so acquainted with it, that I could think and speak in it without effort: so that when, for mere amusement, without any idea of publishing, I began to write a family history as Thady would tell it, he seemed to stand beside me and dictate; and I wrote as fast as my pen could go, the characters all imaginary. Of course they must have been compounded of persons I had seen, or incidents I had heard; but how compounded I do not know. Not by 'long forethought,' for I had never thought of them till I began to write, and had made no sort of plan, sketch, or framework. There

is a fact mentioned in a note of Lady Cathcart having been shut up by her husband, Mr. McGuire, in a house in this neighborhood. So much I knew, but the characters are totally different from what I had heard. Indeed, the real people had been so long dead that little was known of them. Mr. McGuire had no resemblance, at all events, to my Sir Kit; and I knew nothing of Lady Cathcart, but that she was fond of money, and would not give up her diamonds. Sir Condy's history was added two years afterwards: it was not drawn from life, but the good-natured and indolent extravagance was suggested by a relative of mine, long since dead. All the incidents, pure invention; the duty work and duty fowls were facts.

"A curious fact, that where I least aimed at drawing characters, I succeeded best. As far as I have heard, the characters in 'Castle Rackrent' were in their day considered as better classes of Irish characters than any I ever drew; they cost me no trouble, and were made by no *receipt*, or thought of 'philosophical classification:' there was literally not a correction, not an alteration, made in the first writing, no copy, and, as I recollect, no interlineation; it went to the press just as it was written. Other stories I have corrected with the greatest care, and re-modelled and re-written.

"Sir Terence O'Fay in 'The Absentee,' who was a favorite with Sir Walter Scott, and who is, I think, a representative of a class then existing in Ireland, was likewise written off, not philosophically constructed. While I was writing him, I always saw him and heard him speak: he was an individual to me. If I had been thinking of 'classification,' I don't think I should have believed in his real existence. As far as I have heard, he has impressed readers with the idea of his being a reality: yet certainly I had no living model, though introducing several com-

pounded 'incidents;' for instance, hiding the family plate, and cheating about the horse Nabochlish. . . .

"I never could use notes in writing dialogues. It would have been as impossible to me to get in the prepared good things at the right moment, in the warmth of writing conversation, as it would be to lug them in in real conversation: perhaps more so, for I could not write dialogues at all without being at the time fully impressed with the characters, imagining myself each speaker; and that too fully engrossed the imagination to leave time for consulting note-books: the whole fairy vision would melt away, and the pleasure of invention be gone. I might often, while writing, recollect from books or life what would suit, and often from note-books; but then I could not stop to look, and often quoted therefore inaccurately. I have a quick recollective memory, and retentive for the sort of things I particularly want, — they will recur to me at the moment I want them, years and years after they have lain dormant, — but, alas! my memory is inaccurate, has hold of the object only by one side, the side or face that struck my imagination; and if I want more afterwards I do not know even where to look for it. I mention this because Dugald Stewart once was curious to know what sort of memory I had, whether recollective or retentive. . . .

"In every story (except 'Rackrent') which I ever wrote, I have always drawn out a sketch, a framework. All these are in existence; and I have lately compared many of the printed stories with them, some strangely altered, by the way. In the sketch of 'Helen' I had not the judgment I formerly had to see if the anatomy was correct. I have the sketch now before me. . . . Here are the very words of my first sketch. . . . 'The general, not a man of genius or of literary distinction, but of great decision, strength of mind, resolution, some think obstinacy;

high honor, high breeding, all the qualities that win and keep woman's love.'

"In the sketch of Beauclerc, I find these words, — 'Aristocratic, ambitious, tinged with the faults of his class;' and afterwards a sketch of faults which I supposed to arise from his college education, and 'too metaphysical reading, and too much speculative refinement, irresolution, thence *ennui*.' All this, you see, aimed at a class of characters: but unluckily I had not time or room in this story to develop him; he sank into a mere lover. Unfortunately I have not at this moment in my possession the third volume of Stewart's 'Philosophy of the Human Mind on Intellectual Character,' to which Col. Stewart refers me: I have sent for it, but it is not to be had in Dublin, and I have waited too long for it from London; and now I am sorry I must finish this letter without seeing it. What Col. Stewart has said already impressed upon my mind the necessity of more strongly marking the great lines of character by which readers are to understand and recognize the class, the meaning, of characters: but I must acknowledge that I do not feel sure that strict attention to classification would do me good; I am not sure that this would add to the life, the interest. There are little touches of *inconsistency*, which mark reality; for human nature is really inconsistent. And there are *exceptions*, as in grammar rules; and these exceptions, which in characters we call oddities, form, as it were, new rudiments for fresh future classes. It would not be according to Bacon's rules of philosophizing, to limit the number of classes; there being arbitrary distinctions formed from observation of particulars: then fresh particulars, if true, must be admitted. . . . I acknowledge that even a perfectly true character, absolutely taken as a *fac-simile* from real life, would not be interesting in a fiction, might not

be believed, and could not be useful. The value of these odd characters depends, I acknowledge, upon their being actually known to be true. In history, extraordinary characters always interest us with all their inconsistencies, feeling we thus add to our actual knowledge of human nature. In fiction, we have not this conviction, and therefore not this sort or source of pleasure, even if ever so well done: if it be quite a new inconsistency we feel doubtful and averse, but we submit when we know *it is* true. We say, 'Don't therefore tell me it is not in human nature.'

. . . "I feel and understand how many poets and novelists have raised in the mind that sort of enthusiasm which exalts and purifies the soul. Happy, and gifted with Heaven's best gift, must be the poet, the inventor of any sort of fiction, that can raise this enthusiasm. I recollect Mrs. Barbauld's lines describing, —

> 'Generous youth that feeds
> On pictured tales of vast heroic deeds.'

"How I wish I could furnish, as Scott has, some of those pictured tales colored to the life! But I fear I have not that power: therefore it is perhaps that I strive to console myself for my deficiencies, by flattering myself that there is much, though not such glorious, use in my own lesser manner and department. The great virtues, the great vices, excite strong enthusiasm, vehement honor; but, after all, it is not so necessary to warn the generality against these, either by precept or example, as against the lesser faults. We are all sufficiently aware that we must not break the Commandments; and the reasons against all vices, all feel, even to the force of demonstration: but demonstration does not need, and

cannot receive, additional force from fiction. The old Bailey trials, *Les Causes Célèbres*, come with more force, as with the force of actual truth, than can any of the finest fictions.

. . . "Few readers do, or can, put themselves in the places of great criminals, or fear to yield to such and such temptations. They know that they cannot fall to the depth of evil at once, and they have no sympathy, no fear: their spirits are not 'put in the act of falling.' But show them the steep path, the little declivity at first, the step by step downwards; and they tremble. Show them the postern-gates, or little breaches in their citadel of virtue; and they fly to guard these. In short, show to them their own little faults which may lead on to the greatest, and they shudder; that is, if this be done with truth, and brought home to their consciousness. This is all which, by reflection on my own mind, and comparison with others and with records in books, full as much as observations on living subjects, I feel or fancy I have sometimes done or can do. But while I am thus *ladling* out praise to myself in this way, I do not flatter myself that I deserve the quantity of praise which Col. Stewart gives me, for laborious observation, or for steadiness and nicety of dissection. My father, to whose judgment I habitually refer to help out my own judgment of myself, and who certainly must from long acquaintance, to say no more, have known my character better than any other person can, always reproached me for trusting too much to my hasty glances — *aperçus*, as he called them — of character or truths. And often have I had, and have still (past my grand climacteric), to repent every day my mistaken conclusions and hasty jumps to conclusions. Perhaps you wish I should jump to conclusion now, and so I will."

The remarks made by Col. Stewart about the inconsistency of the characters of Miss Edgeworth's "Helen" were not considered just by Capt. Hall and many of her other friends, who entirely differed from him in his opinion. They expressed themselves as being much impressed with the reality of the book, and its fidelity to life.

"Helen" was widely read by the most intelligent and cultivated people, and made the subject of much comment. H. F. Chorley, in his "Autobiography," says, "The delight and culture to be gained by standing as a background figure in such circles [meaning among highly gifted people] cannot be overrated. Well has Miss Edgeworth remarked, in her 'Helen,' that there is a time in every man's life when such experiences are of priceless value;" and he adds that Barry Cornwall and Basil Montague are among the characters of "Helen."

"The Dublin University Magazine" says, —

"Our eyes were gladdened by the appearance of a new novel from the pen of Miss Edgeworth. Dear, precious Maria Edgeworth! We felt the sound of her name like the return of spring, and have looked upon her pages with the eager delight with which we should greet the approach of a long-lost acquaintance."

Such words, such greetings, from all were most cheering to the author, who again appeared before the public, which was no slight ordeal, after so many years of silence. Years that had changed much, new generations of readers, and modern novels, had not supplanted the well-earned fame of Miss Edge-

worth. She was favored with a genuine ovation from the best and brightest minds of Great Britain and America.

In 1835 Miss Mary Sneyd, who was a very old lady, had a dangerous illness; but she recovered, and survived a few years longer, to brighten the home at Edgeworthstown, where she had lived for so long.

CHAPTER XX.

Visit of the Ticknors to Edgeworthstown. — Remarks of Maria. — Letter to W. B. O. Peabody. — Mrs. Farrar's Visit to Maria. — Condition of Ireland at this Time. — Mr. Sprague's Sketch of his Day with Maria. — Leigh Hunt's "Blue-Stocking Revels." — Southey. — A Visit to England. — Mrs. Sigourney's Meeting with Miss Edgeworth. — Maria made Honorary Member of the Royal Irish Society. — Hall's Account of Edgeworthstown and the Family. — A Visit to Maria. — Impressions of Maria's Home Life.

Mr. George Ticknor,[1] accompanied by his family, visited Edgeworthstown in 1835; and some extracts from his journal will interest the American readers: —

"*Aug. 21.* — We set out pretty early this morning to make a visit, by invitation, to the Edgeworths, at Edgeworthstown, sixty-five English miles from Dublin. . . .

"At last we approached the house. There was no mistaking it. We had seen none such for a long time. It is spacious, with an ample veranda and conservatory covering part of its front quite beautifully, and situated in a fine lawn of the richest green, interspersed with clumps of venerable oaks and beeches. As we drove to the door, Miss Edgeworth came out to meet us, — a small, short, spare lady of about sixty-seven, with extremely frank and kind manners, and who always looks straight

[1] Professor of Modern Literature, Harvard University, author of History of Spanish Literature, and other works: born in Boston 1791; died 1871.

into your face with a pair of mild, deep gray eyes, whenever she speaks to you. With her characteristic directness, she did not take us into the library until she had told us that we should find there Mrs. Alison of Edinburgh, and her aunt, Miss Sneyd, a person very old and infirm; and that the only other persons constituting the family were Mrs. Edgeworth, Miss Honora Edgeworth, and Dr. Alison, a physician, and son of the author on 'Taste.' Having thus put us *en pays de connaissance*, she carried us into the library. It is quite a large room, full of books, and every way comfortable as a sitting-room. We had not been there five minutes, before we were, by her kindness and vivacity, put completely at our ease; a sensation which we do not seem likely to lose during our visit. Soon after we were seated, and had become a little acquainted with Mrs. Alison, — who is a daughter of the famous Dr. Gregory, — the rest of the party came in from a drive.

"Mrs. Edgeworth, who is of the Beaufort family, seems about the age of her more distinguished step-daughter, and is somewhat stout, but very active, intelligent, and accomplished; having apparently the whole care of the household, and adding materially, by her resources in the arts and in literature, to its agreeableness. . . .

"It is plain they make a harmonious whole; and, by those who visited here when the family was much larger, and composed of the children of all the wives of Mr. Edgeworth, with their connections produced by marriage, so as to form the most heterogeneous relationships, I am told there was always the same very striking union and agreeable intercourse among them all, to the number sometimes of fifteen or twenty. . . .

"After sitting about an hour in the library . . . we went to dress, and punctually at half-past six were sum-

moned by the bell to dinner. . . . At half-past eight we rejoined the ladies in the library, which seems to be the only sitting-room; at nine we had tea and coffee, and at half-past ten went to bed. . . . What has struck me most to-day in Miss Edgeworth herself is, her uncommon quickness of perception, her fertility of allusion, and the great resources of fact which a remarkable memory supplies to her, combined into a whole which I can call nothing else but extraordinary vivacity. She certainly talks quite as well as Lady Delacour or Lady Davenant, and much in the style of both of them, though more in that of Lady Davenant. . . .

"*Aug. 22.*—It has been a rainy day to-day. We did not really separate during the whole day, from breakfast, at nine, until bedtime, half after eleven. The whole time was passed in the library; except the breakfast, which was protracted to an hour's length by sitting round the table; lunch, which is really the dinner of most people; . . . and dinner itself, from half-past six to half-past eight.

"Miss Edgeworth's conversation was always ready, and as full of vivacity and variety as I can imagine. It was, too, no less full of good-nature. She was disposed to defend everybody, even Lady Morgan, as far as she could, though never so far as to be unreasonable. And in her intercourse with her family she was quite delightful; referring constantly to Mrs. Edgeworth, who seems to be the authority in all matters of fact, and most kindly repeating jokes to her infirm aunt, Miss Sneyd, who cannot hear them, and who seems to have for her the most unbounded affection and admiration.

"About herself, as an author, she seems to have no reserve or secrets. She spoke with great kindness and pleasure of a letter I brought to her from Mr. Pea-

body,[1] explaining some passage in his review of 'Helen,' which had troubled her from its allusion to her father; 'but,' she added, 'nobody can know what I owe to my father: he advised and directed me in every thing; I never could have done any thing without him. These are things I cannot be mistaken about, though other people can, — I *know* them.' As she said this the tears stood in her eyes, and her whole person was moved.

"Of 'Helen,' she said that it was a recent conception altogether, first imagined about two years before it was printed. The Collingwoods, she said, were a clumsy part of it: she put them in, thinking to make something of them, but was disappointed, and there they stuck; she could not get them out again. Many parts of it were much altered: two only were printed just as they were first put on paper, with hardly the correction of a word, — Lady Davenant's conversation with Helen in the pony phaeton, and Lady Cecilia's conversation with Helen towards the end, telling her all that had happened during their separation. These two portions she said she dictated to her sister Lucy, whom she represented to be a person of sure taste. She dictated these particular passages because, as they were to represent narrative conversation, she thought this mode of composing them would give them a more natural air; and whenever her sister's pen hesitated, she altered the word at once. 'So,' said she, 'all that turned out right; and I was very glad of it, for Lucy's sake as well as my own.'

"'Taking for Granted,' she told me, was sketched very roughly about fifteen years ago; and she is now employed in working it entirely over again, and bringing it out. She was curious to know what instances I had

[1] W. B. O. Peabody, clergyman, accomplished scholar, and poet. Born 1799, died 1847.

ever witnessed of persons suffering from 'taking for granted' what proved false, and desired me quite earnestly, and many times, to write to her about it; 'for,' she added, 'you would be surprised if you knew how much I pick up in this way.' — 'The story,' she said, 'must begin lightly, and the early instances of mistake might be comic; but it must end tragically.' I told her I was sorry for it. 'Well,' said she, 'I can't help it: it must be so. The best I can do for you, is to leave it quite uncertain whether it is possible the man who is to be my victim can ever be happy again or not.'

"But neither 'Helen' nor 'Taking for Granted,' she said, is the subject she should be glad to write about, and write about with the most interest. It is something connected with the religious and political parties that are ruining Ireland, 'my poor Ireland.' — 'But,' she went on, 'it won't do. Few would listen, and those that would listen would do it to serve their own purposes. It won't do; and I am sorry for it, very sorry.'

"But, though she talked thus freely about herself and her works, she never introduced the subject, and never seemed glad to continue it. She talked quite as well, and with quite as much interest, on every thing else. Indeed, though I watched carefully for it, I could not detect, on the one side, any of the mystification of authorship, nor, on the other, any of its vanity. . . . The sustained tone of conversation, however, with her unquenchable vivacity, was, I think, — continued as it was through so long a day, — a little fatiguing to her. She was just the same to the last moment, just as quick in repartee, and just as gay in her allusions and remarks; but her countenance showed that her physical strength was hardly equal to it. Indeed, she is of a feeble constitution naturally, though for the last two years she has

gained strength. It was, therefore, something of a trial to talk so brilliantly and variously as she did, from nine in the morning till past eleven at night.

"*Sunday, Aug. 23.* — To-day was more quiet; not less interesting or agreeable than yesterday, but less exciting. We went to church with the family, who all seemed Episcopalians in principle and practice. Miss Edgeworth carried her favorite prayer-book in a nice case, and knelt and made all the responses very devoutly. The church is small, but neat; and their pew is the place of honor in it, with a canopy and recess as large as any two other pews. . . . On one side of the altar was a small, plain, oval tablet, to the memory of their grandfather, bearing no inscription but his name, and the time of his birth and death; and on the other side was one exactly like it, . . . to their father, who died in 1817. The whole had the air of decency and reverence that ought always to be found in a village church; but the sermon was Calvinistic, from a young man, and the congregation very small, making a striking contrast to the congregation which poured out from the Catholic chapel in the neighborhood, so as to fill and throng the highway.

"The Edgeworths have always been on the most kindly terms with their Catholic neighbors and tenantry. But, like many other Protestants whom I have met, they feel rather uncomfortably at the encroaching spirit which the Emancipation Bill has awakened in the whole Catholic population of the island, and the exclusive character and tone assumed by the priests, who have every day, as they assure me, more and more the air of claiming superiority; especially where, as in the case of Edgeworthstown, the old priests have been removed, and Jesuits placed in their stead.

"After lunch — there is only one service in the church — Miss Edgeworth showed me a good many curious letters from Dumont, — one in particular, giving an account of Mme. de Staël's visit, in 1813, to Lord Lansdowne at Bowood, for a week, when Mackintosh, Romilly, Schlegel, Rogers, and a quantity more of distinguished people, were there; but Miss Edgeworth declined, not feeling apparently willing to live in a state of continual exhibition for so long a time. It was, however, very brilliant, and was most brilliantly described by Dumont. One thing amused me very much. Mme. de Staël, who had just been reading the 'Tales of Fashionable Life,' — then recently published, — with great admiration, said to Dumont of Miss Edgeworth, 'Vraiment elle était digne de l'enthousiasme, mais elle se perd dans votre triste utilité.' It seemed to delight Miss Edgeworth excessively, and it was to show me this that she looked up the letters.

"In the evening she showed me her long correspondence with Sir Walter Scott, — at least his part of it. When she was in Edinburgh, in 1823, Lady Scott expressed her surprise that Scott and Miss Edgeworth had not met when Miss Edgeworth was in Edinburgh in 1803. 'Why,' said Sir Walter, with one of his queer looks, 'you forget, my dear, Miss Edgeworth was not a lion then; and my mane, you know, was not grown at all.' She told many stories of him; all showing an admiration for him, and a personal interest in him and his fame, which it was delightful to witness in the only person that could have been fancied his rival. During the evening she was very agreeable, and in the latter part of it very brilliant with repartee; so that we sat late together, not separating until midnight. Every thing shows that her mind is as active, and as capable of producing 'Ennui,'

or 'The Absentee,' now, as at any previous period. In fact, 'Helen' proves it.

"*Aug. 24.* — The house and many of its arrangements — the bells, the doors, etc. — bear witness to that love of mechanical trifling of which Mr. Edgeworth was so often accused. It was only this morning that I fully learnt how to open, shut, and lock our chamber-door; and the dressing-glass, at which I have shaved for three mornings, is somewhat of a mystery to me still. Things are in general very convenient and comfortable through the house; though, as elsewhere in Ireland, there is a want of English exactness and finish. However, all such matters, even if carried much farther than they are, would be mere trifles in the midst of so much kindness, hospitality, and intellectual pleasures of the highest order, as we enjoyed under their roof; where hospitality is so abundant that they have often had twenty or thirty friends come upon them unexpectedly, when the family was much larger than it is now."

The pleasure of this visit was evidently mutual; for Miss Edgeworth wrote of how much she was gratified by the visit, and interested in Mr. Ticknor's fine mind and conversation. After Mr. Ticknor's visit to Ireland in 1835, Miss Edgeworth wrote a friend: —

"I have been acquainted, and I may say intimately, with some of the most distinguished literary persons in Great Britain, France, and Switzerland, and have seen and heard all those distinguished for conversational talents, — Talleyrand, Dumont, Mackintosh, Romilly, Dugald Stewart, Erskine, Sir Walter Scott, Sydney Smith, and Mr. Sharpe, the fashionable dinner-lions of London. I have passed days in the country-houses and in the do-

mestic intimacy of some of them: and after all I can, with strict truth, assure you that Mr. Ticknor's conversation appeared to me fully on an equality with the most admired, in happy, apposite readiness of recollection and appreciation of knowledge, in stores of anecdotes, and in *ease* in producing them; and in depths of reflection not inferior to those we have been accustomed to consider our deepest thinkers. But what interested and attracted us was the character of Mr. Ticknor, the moral worth and truth which we saw in him. We feel that we have made a friend in him."

Miss Edgeworth was always pleased to make friends; but she had not that disagreeable characteristic of modern literary people,—a desire to meet new people, and make new conquests, and an inordinate capacity for being bored by old friends, who were not literary, or sufficiently useful in helping one on in a career. Her affectionate heart was as strong an element of character as her clear, active brain. In 1836 she wrote: —

"In this world in which I have lived nearly three-quarters of a century, I have found nothing one quarter so well worth living for as old friends."

The following letter to Mr. Peabody will serve to show the amiable and sincere nature of Maria. She felt pained by something he had written; but on receiving, through Professor Ticknor, an assurance that his allusion in the review of "Helen" had been misunderstood by her, she hastened to reply to his kind letter in these words: —

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, Sept. 4, 1835.

DEAR SIR, — I have received the very kind and candid letter which you sent me by Mr. Ticknor; and, believe me, whatever pain I felt has been effaced; and a sense of gratitude and of esteem for your candor and your humanity and politeness will remain, as long as I live, in my mind.

Last February I wrote to you, expressing the satisfaction I had felt, both for your sake and my own, in reading a very candid and noble-minded letter of yours addressed to the ex-governor Winthrop, which he forwarded to me. Candor is not always united with the highest literary talents. Unfortunately, the habit of literary warfare, and the necessity, as some narrow minds feel it, of supporting an opinion once expressed, make this virtue of candor very rare. We the more esteem it whenever it courageously appears. I beg you to believe, sir, that, independently of the grateful feelings which you have raised in my mind on my father's account and my own, I have a just sense of your conduct as a public character, as a judge of moral as well as literary worth; and I appreciate your feelings as those of a true gentleman. It will give me great pleasure to see a review by you of "Professional Education."

When I wrote to you last February, I at the same time wrote orders to a bookseller in London to forward to you, by means of my friend Mr. Gerald Ralstone, a copy of my father's "Professional Education," his "Essay on Roads and Wheel-Carriages," and his "Essay on the (*sic*) Tellograph." I hope these reached you from me, as tokens of my respect and regard. I presume you have my father's (*sic*) mem^rs^, or would have sent them. If there are any other books of ours, or of any other English author, which you wish to have, I should have pleasure in sending them to you; and I can easily find ways and

means: good-will is very expert and efficient at that work. I wish you to know, sir (and I hope it is from proper, not improper, pride the wish arises), that I never, in the whole course of my life, remonstrated against criticism, or took any notice of attacks made in reviews upon my father or myself; but I was persuaded that you, from the whole tone of your publication, and of the article in which you mentioned my father, were only under error, and not willing to wound. Therefore I expressed my sentiments in a private letter to a friend, and was desirous that you should be thoroughly informed and set right, believing that you would act as you have done.

You mentioned, with becoming indignation, a certain review, published fourteen years ago, on my father's memoirs. The honest warmth of your expression, a "*brutal review*," roused my curiosity. I had never read it. At the time it came out my friends advised me not to look at it; assuring me that it was not worth my while to read, or theirs to answer it. I had determined never to answer any literary attacks; and I was assured by those on whom I could best depend, that this, from its malignancy, and from its total want of merit of any kind, would do no injury to my father's memory. I never read the review till a few weeks ago, and then it was in consequence of your mention of it.

I rejoice now that I did not read it at the time. It came out so soon after my father's death, I might have been hurt by it, and might have been urged by the feelings of the moment to reply, and thus have prevented it from falling into that public contempt in which it has sunk.

Were it at all worth while, I could give you, sir, for your private satisfaction, irrefragable proof of the falsehood of many of the assertions made by that anonymous writer. But I trust that it is unnecessary.

We have had great pleasure in seeing here your accomplished and amiable countryman, Mr. Ticknor, — and Mrs. Ticknor, worthy of him; and we feel both pride and pleasure in his promise that he will make us another visit after he has finished his intended three-years' tour on the continent of Europe, and before he returns to America. When he knew me only by the books we have published, I was highly gratified by his thinking it worth while to come to Edgeworthstown to make our acquaintance; but having made it, and having spent some days in this family, his kind determination to return to us we feel infinitely more gratifying.

May we hope, sir, that, if you should ever visit these countries, you will let us have the satisfaction of seeing you? And in the mean time, will you believe me to be, not in mere common phrase, but in earnest truth,

Your obliged and grateful,

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

To the REV. W. B. O. PEABODY,
Springfield, Mass., United States America.

Mrs. Farrar made a visit this year to Miss Edgeworth. She also was impressed with the gracious hospitality, and her observations are worth quoting. Maria wrote at once on hearing of their wish to visit her: —

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, Sept. 3, 1836.

DEAR MADAM, — I hasten to assure you and Professor Farrar that we feel highly honored and gratified by your kind intention of paying us a visit. Mrs. Edgeworth desires me to say that we shall be at home all next week; and we shall be most happy to receive you, and your

young friend, Mr. W——, any day after the 5th which may be most convenient to you. We say after the 5th, because on the 5th my sister (Harriet) Mrs. Butler, and her husband, the Rev. Mr. Butler, will come to us; and independently of the pleasure they will have, I am sure, in your society, I own I wish that you should become acquainted with them, especially as we are unlucky at this moment in not having any of my brothers at home. My brother-in-law, Mr. Butler, is, as you will find, a man of literature and learning; besides being all that you will like in other respects, from the truth and rectitude and simplicity of his character.

I am much obliged to you for the letters you were so good as to enclose to me. Of all our friends in Boston and Cambridge, we shall, I hope, have time to inquire further and to converse.

There was only one thing in your letter which did not give us pleasure; and we trust that after your arrival, and after you have had some hours to reflect, and a night quietly to sleep upon it, you will repent and recant, and give up your *cruel purpose* of giving us only one day. Mrs. Edgeworth will remonstrate with you, I think, more effectually than I can; and in the mean time I promise to allow you till the morning after your arrival to become sufficiently acquainted with the ways of the house and family, before I turn to you, as I shall (I warn you) at breakfast, for your *ultimatum*.

I am, dear madam (for the present),

Your much obliged and grateful

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

P. S. — It must increase my interest in making your acquaintance, my dear Mrs. Farrar, to know that you are sister to Mr. Benjamin R——, whose talents I with great

reason admire, and for whose kindness and agreeable letters I have equally great reason to be grateful.

"The cordiality and frankness of this letter made us all desirous of visiting the writer. We were much struck with the manner in which Mrs. Edgeworth was mentioned and made of importance as the lady of the house, when the whole place was the property of Miss Edgeworth, and she was at least thirty years older [*sic*] than her step-mother."

Her brother had become so embarrassed in his affairs as to be obliged to sell his patrimonial estate; and, to prevent its passing into the hands of strangers, Miss Edgeworth had bought it, and made her step-mother mistress of the establishment, whilst she lived with her as a daughter.

"It was a great pleasure to me to see the sister of two of Mr. Edgeworth's wives, — one belonging to the same period, and dressed in the same style, as the lovely Honora. She did not appear till lunch-time, when we found her seated at the table in a wheel-chair, on account of her lameness. She reminded me of the pictures of the court-beauties of the time of Louis XIV. Her dress was truly elegant, and very elaborate. Her white hair had the effect of powder, and the structure on it defies description. A very white throat was set off to advantage by a narrow black velvet ribbon, fastened by a jewel. The finest lace ruffles about her neck and elbows, with a long-waisted silk dress of rich texture and color, produced an effect that was quite bewitching. She was wonderfully well preserved for a lady of over eighty years of age, and it was pleasant to see the great attention paid to her by all the family. She was rather deaf: so I was seated by her side, and requested to address my conversation to her.

When lunch was over, she was wheeled into the library, and occupied herself making a cotton net to put over the wall-fruit, to keep it from the birds. It was worth a journey to Edgeworthstown only to see this elegant specimen of old age.

"When shown to our bedroom, we found such an extraordinary lock on the door that we dared not shut it for fear of not being able to open it again. That room, too, was unlike any other I ever saw. It was very large, with three huge windows, two of them heavily curtained; and the third converted into a small wardrobe, with doors of pink cotton on a wooden frame. It had two very large four-posted bedsteads, with full suits of curtains, and an immense folding-screen that divided the room in two, making each occupant as private as if in a separate room, with a dressing-table and ample washing conveniences on each side. A large grate filled with turf, and all ready for lighting, with a great basket lined with tin, and also filled with the same fuel, reminded us strongly that we were in Ireland. Large wax candles were on the mantelpiece, and every convenience necessary to our comfort."

Miss Edgeworth was very short, "and carried herself very upright, with a dapper figure and quick movements. She was the remains of a blonde, with light eyes and hair: she was now gray, but wore a dark frisette, whilst the gray hair showed through her cap behind. . . .

"In conversation we found her delightful. She was full of anecdotes about remarkable people, and often spoke from her personal knowledge of them. Her memory, too, was stored with valuable information; and her manner of narrating was so animated that it was difficult to realize her age. In telling an anecdote of Mirabeau,

she stepped out before us, and, extending her arms, spoke a sentence of his in the impassioned manner of a French orator, and did it so admirably that it was quite thrilling."

They made a visit to the village, to see the schools and improvements in the buildings made by the family.

"It was market-day: so the main street was full of the lower order of Irish, with their horses and carts, asses and panniers, tables and stands full of eatables and articles of clothing. Sometimes the cart or car served as a counter on which to display their goods. The women in bright-colored cotton gowns, and white caps with full double borders, made a very gay appearance. As we all passed through the crowd to the schoolhouse, the enmity of the Papists to Protestant landholders was but too evident.

"Though Mrs. Edgeworth had been the Lady Bountiful of the village for many years, there were no bows or smirks for her and her friends, no making way before her, no touching of hats, or pleasant looks. A sullen expression and a dogged immovability were on every side of us."

The sullenness on which Mrs. Farrar comments was not because the Edgeworths had not done their very best for the tenants and villagers around them. It must be attributed to causes which underlie all the Irish difficulties, — difficulties which are too deep-seated for discussion here. Certain it is that the sympathies and interest of Miss Edgeworth were all enlisted in behalf of Ireland. She was a genuine

lover of Ireland, and to her latest day felt the deepest affection for the country and the people. Though English on her mother's side, and born in England, she was Irish in all her sympathies and interests; and her life-long study was to best promote the happiness of those around her. She had a visit during this same year (1836) from the Rev. William B. Sprague, an American, who left a record of his visit in a book called "European Celebrities," published in 1855. He says, —

"As the coach passed Miss Edgeworth's gate, a servant came out to take my luggage; but, as the hotel was within a few rods, I preferred to keep my seat until we reached it, and the servant followed me to accompany me back to the house. The village is as miserable looking a place as one often sees; and, as it was market-day, I had an opportunity of witnessing the degradation of the whole surrounding population to the greatest advantage. But the Edgeworth house was a fine, spacious old mansion, with a splendid lawn stretching before it, and every thing to indicate opulence and hereditary distinction. I do not remember to have seen what I thought a more beautiful place in all Ireland.

"As I entered the house, Miss Edgeworth was the first person to meet me; and she immediately introduced me to her mother, Mrs. Edgeworth, her father's fourth wife, and her sister, Miss Honora Edgeworth. Miss Edgeworth, in her personal appearance, was any thing but what I expected. She was below the middle size; her face was exceedingly plain, though strongly indicative of intellect; and though she seemed to possess great vigor of body as well as of mind, it was, after all, the vigor of old age. I supposed her to be about sixty-five, but I believe

she was actually on the wrong side of seventy. Her stepmother, Mrs. Edgeworth, who, for aught I know, is still living, must have been, I think, rather younger than Maria, and was not only a lady of high intelligence, but of great personal attractions, and withal, as I afterwards ascertained, of a very serious turn of mind. As Miss Edgeworth knew that my visit was to be limited to a single day, she told me almost immediately that she wished to know in what way she could contribute most to my gratification, — whether by remaining in the house, or walking over the grounds; kindly suggesting at the same time that I had better first take a little lunch, and then a little rest. She talked upon a great variety of subjects, and I set her down as decidedly one of the best talkers I ever met with. There was nothing about her that had even any affinity to showing off, or trying to talk well; but she evidently did not know how to talk otherwise. She seemed to have the most mature thoughts on every subject; and, without the semblance of effort, they took on the most attractive dress. I was not unwilling to hear what she had to say about slavery. She reprobated the course of the ultra anti-slavery men, as eminently adapted to defeat its own end, and remarked, that to give the slaves liberty before they were qualified to use it, would be only giving them liberty to starve, and perhaps to cut each other's throats and the throats of their masters. I happened to relate an anecdote which I had heard, of a young man in Edinburgh having read as an exercise before the Presbytery a sermon, the substance of which he had heard a celebrated clergyman preach; and it turned out afterwards that the clergyman himself had stolen it from some book. 'Dear me,' said Miss Edgeworth, 'that was like taking the impression of a forged guinea.'

"She spoke of Sir Walter Scott with boundless respect,

and represented him as being simple as a child, and immediately added, that she regarded him, Sir James Mackintosh, and Dr. Channing, as the three finest writers the age had produced. She spoke respectfully of many Americans who had visited her, but she thought the most thoroughly accomplished gentleman whom she had seen from the United States was Professor Ticknor. She regretted that she had never heard Robert Hall preach; but she thought his published sermons were incomparably eloquent, and his character, as it came out in his life, was one of the highest interest. She talked a good deal about Mme. de Staël; and though she had never seen her, she had seen and admired her two children, — the Baron de Staël, and the Duchesse de Broglie. She said that there could be no doubt that she was chargeable with some very gross errors in her life, but some allowance must be made for the customs of the country; that it was greatly in her favor that she condemned her own course, and inculcated rigid virtue upon her children and others; and that some of the Frenchwomen seemed to her to think that Mme. de Staël's principal sin consisted in her repentance. She expressed great veneration for the character of Mrs. Hannah More, though she thought that in her old age she was a little too puritanical in thinking it a loss of time to read Sir Walter Scott's works. She alluded with regret to the attacks that had been made upon our country by British travellers, but she thought they were generally so palpably unjust as to carry their own antidote along with them. She said that Mrs. Trollope, with all her bad behavior, was certainly very clever, that some of her descriptions showed a high order of talent; and as for Capt. Hall, he was at once an ill-tempered and good-natured creature; that he had his object to answer in making his book, and he had accomplished it as well as he could.

"She opened her closet, and asked me to notice the American part of her library; and I observed it consisted almost entirely of books which had been presented by her Unitarian friends at Boston. Some of her own works happened to be there also, and she was led to speak of her experience with some of her publishers. She mentioned that one of them had repeatedly requested her to abate from the amount which he had engaged to pay her, and that she had done so; but at length, after she had told him explicitly to make proposals he would abide by, he wrote her a letter, saying, that he wished another abatement, and that he found that on the whole he had lost by her works; and she then wrote him in reply, that in consequence of the loss he had sustained, she would transfer her publications to other hands. He afterwards earnestly requested that she would excuse him for having thus written, and desired to retain the works; but *she* was inflexible, and *he* very angry. Her former publisher, she said, when he found himself dying, called for a letter to her which was then unfinished, and requested that there should be inserted a promise of ten or twelve hundred pounds more than he had engaged to give her for one of her works; for it had been so much more profitable to him than he had expected, that he could not die in peace till he had done justly by her. And his heirs executed his will in accordance with this dying suggestion."

After walking about the grounds, and visiting the little church with Mrs. Edgeworth, they went to the family vault of Edgeworths, where many of them were laid. They "walked also to the house of the old rector of the church, who, I understood, was a worthy man, but I judged not a very stirring preacher. We called at two or three of the neigh-

boring cottages, which looked forlorn enough, but still much better than what I had seen the day before. I said to one of the women, who seemed to have things around her a little more comfortable than her neighbors, 'You seem, madam, to be quite well off here.' — 'Yes, may it please your honor,' replied she, 'and long life to the family that have made us so.' When we returned from the walk, Miss Edgeworth had got several letters of introduction in readiness for me; and I had only time to take them, before the coach was at the door. I had many testimonies of Maria Edgeworth's kindness afterwards, as I corresponded with her as long as she lived."

The death of Sophy (Edgeworth), the wife of Col. Barry Fox, whose marriage had been so joyfully announced some years previously to Sir Walter Scott, by Maria, was a great blow to Miss Edgeworth. Her cousin, Miss Sophy Ruxton, also died in this year.

Miss Edgeworth kept up her spirits as bravely as possible, and in the midst of affliction turned her mind as well as she could to her remaining blessings. In 1837 she learned Spanish from her sister-in-law, Mrs. Francis Edgeworth, and was laughed at by her brother, she wrote, for "learning a new language at seventy."

In Leigh Hunt's "Blue-Stocking Revels, or The Feast of the Violets," which appeared first in "The Monthly Repository," 1837, there are two mentions made of Miss Edgeworth, who figures among her sister authoresses who appear at Apollo's ball. Of this poem, Rogers said it would have been sufficient

"to set up half a dozen young men about town in a reputation for wit and fancy." Leigh Hunt himself says of it, "It was thought by somebody that objection was intended to Mrs. Somerville, because it was said of her, —

> "Instead of the little Loves, laughing at colleges,
> Round her, in doctor's caps, flew little knowledges."

He says he meant neither want of amiability nor any disrespect to this learned lady. The whole poem is meant as a description, half jest, half earnest, of "what sort of rebuke Apollo gave his nymphs," and

> "*This* is
> Of Phœbus and woman and blue-stocking blisses."

The supper being laid, —

> "The genius that stood behind each lady's chair,
> From her dish took the cover; when forth in glad air
> Leaped a couple of small merry Loves, who displayed —
> What d'ye think? — a new girdle? a busk? a new braid?
> No: the sweetest blue stockings that ever were made.
> The blue was a violet, fresh as first love."

The poet then tells all the ladies, that, as long as they unite the feminine charms with their knowledge, —

> "Even though they may speak,
> Not with Sappho's eyes only, but even her Greek," —

their stocking will be violet, but that, —

> "If you grow formal or fierce or untrue,
> Alas, gentle color! sweet ankle, adieu!
> Thou art changed; and Love's self at the changing looks blue.

Seize the golden occasion, then. You who already
Are gentle, remain so; and you who would steady
Your natures, and mend them, and make out your call
To be men's best companions, be such, once for all.
And remember that nobody, woman or man,
Ever charmed the next ages, since writing began,
Who thought by shrewd dealing sound fame to arrive at, —
Had one face in print, and another in private."

After naming several of the now almost unknown novelists and celebrated poetesses, —

"At the sight of Miss Edgeworth, he said, 'Here comes one,
As sincere and as kind as lives under the sun;
Not poetical, eh? nor much given to insist
On utilities not in utility's list
(Things, nevertheless, without which the large heart
Of my world would but play a poor husk of a part):
But most truly, within her own sphere sympathetic, —
And that's no mean help towards the practic-poetic.'
Then, smiling, he said a most singular thing, —
He thanked her for making him 'saving of string!'
But for fear she should fancy he didn't approve her in
Matters more weighty, praised much her 'Manœuvring;'
A book which, if aught could pierce craniums so dense,
Might supply cunning folks with a little good sense.
And her Irish (he added) poor souls! so impressed him,
He knew not if most they amused or distressed him.

No fault had Miss Ferrier to find with her lot,
She was hailed by the god as the 'lauded of Scott.'"

In Apollo's description of Lady Morgan, Hunt is very clever, —

"Mrs. Hall may say 'oh!' and Miss Edgeworth 'fie!'
But my lady will know all the what and the why."

At the supper, he adds, —

"I'm told that Miss Edgeworth became so vivacious,
The damsels from boarding-school whispered, 'My gracious!'"

describing the merry talk.

Miss Edgeworth urged the return of the Ticknors, saying, —

"We are very eager, very anxious, to see you again at our home, retired and homely as it is. You flattered us you were happy here during the two short days you gave us. Oh, pray, *pray* come to us again before you go from our world forever, — at least, from me forever. Consider my age! and Mrs. Mary Sneyd begs you to consider her. I trust you will. Be pleased, my dear friends, to like or to love us all as much as ever you can; and pray prove to us that you will take as much trouble to come to Edgeworthstown, after having become acquainted with us, as you took when you only knew the authorship part of

"Your affectionate friend,

"MARIA EDGEWORTH."

This letter, written in 1838, showed how much she was interested in these American friends. A constant correspondence was maintained for years, but the Ticknors were not able to revisit their Irish friends.

She lost one friend in America during this year. Mrs. Lazarus, the Jewish lady with whom Miss Edgeworth had been for many years on most friendly terms, died in 1838. This year Miss Edgeworth made a visit to the Butlers at Trim, which she felt was a second home to her, as the kindness of her

sister Harriet and Mr. Butler was peculiarly cordial. Mr. Butler was a cultivated man, and she had great confidence in his judgment and taste.

Dr. Mackenzie about this time had mentioned to Miss Edgeworth that Southey was employed in working up materials for his own life; and her reply was as follows: —

"I thank you for telling me that Southey is engaged in literary biography. His 'Life of Nelson' is one of the finest pieces of biography I know. I have seen its effects on many young minds. I had the honor of meeting Mr. Southey some years since at a mutual friend's, Dr. Holland's, in London. But such is the nature of that sort of town intercourse, that I had not opportunity of hearing much of his conversation, and he none of mine: therefore I can hardly presume that he remembers me. But I would wish to convey to him, through you, the true expression of my respect for his character, and the admiration of his talents and of the use he has made of them."

Southey, in replying to Dr. Mackenzie, says, —

"I recollect hearing of Miss Edgeworth at Dr. Holland's, but have no recollection of seeing her there; but I very well remember seeing her more than once at Clifton in 1800, at which time her father said to me, 'Take my word for it, sir, your genius is for comedy.' He formed this opinion, I believe, from some of the Nondescripts, and one or two Ballads which had just then appeared in 'The Annual Anthology.' This, I think, will be worth mentioning in the preface to the Ballads. When you write to Miss Edgeworth, present my thanks for her obliging message, and say that I am pleased at being remembered by her."

In 1839 Honora Edgeworth married Sir Francis Beaufort, often mentioned by Miss Edgeworth in earlier years. He was the brother of Mrs. Edgeworth, her step-mother, and distinguished as hydrographer of the navy; and he held the rank of admiral at his death. He was a most amiable, high-principled, and accomplished officer.

In 1839 Miss Edgeworth, in writing to Mrs. Ticknor, who had described to her their home and library, answered in her animated and sympathetic manner.

"Who talks of Boston in a voice so sweet? Who wishes to see me there? to show their home, their library, their country? I have been there, have sat in the library too, and *thought*, and thought it all charming! Looking into the country, as you know the windows all do, I saw down through the vista of trees to the quiet bay and the beautiful hills beyond; and I watched the glories of the setting sun lighting up country and town.

"I met Sir Walter Scott in Mr. Ticknor's library, with all his benign, calm expression of countenance, his eye of genius, and his mouth of humor; such as he was before the life of life was gone, such as genius loved to see him, such as American genius has given him to American friendship, immortalized in person as in mind. His very self I see, feeling, thinking, and about to speak, and to a friend to whom he loved to speak; and well-placed and to his liking, he seems, in this congenial library, presiding and sympathizing.

"But, my dear madam, ten thousand books, about ten thousand books, do you say, this library contains? My dear Mrs. Ticknor! Then I am afraid you must have double rows, and that is a plague. Your library is thirty-five by twenty-two, you say. But, to be sure, you have

not given me the height; and height may make out room enough. Pray have it measured for me, that I may drive this odious notion of *double rows* out of my head."

This portrait of Scott was painted by Leslie from life, at Abbotsford, by Mr. Ticknor's order, in 1824.

In 1840 the adoption of the penny-post system rather disturbed Miss Edgeworth, she had so accustomed herself to writing and receiving long letters from her friends and relatives. She also enjoyed the franking privilege from her official friends: so that all her ideas about letter-writing had to be adjusted to meet the new condition of the mails. She made one of her long annual visits at the Butlers' at Trim in this year. In writing Mr. Ticknor at this time, she asked him to give her an account of the state of metaphysics in America.

In the winter of 1840–41 Miss Edgeworth made a pleasant visit in London. She passed some days at Hampstead Hall, then the home of her friends the Moilliets. On her way she visited several friends, among them the Darwins, Marcets, Romillys, and others. She heard the following good story, among others, at this time, and, in writing a friend, asks, —

"Do you recollect the history of the Irishman who declared he had seen anchovies growing on the walls at Gibraltar? Challenged a gentleman for doubting him; met, and fired, and hit his man; and when the man who was hit sprang up as he received the shot, and the second observed, 'How he capers!' — 'By the powers! It was capers I meant, 'stead of anchovies.'"

In Mrs. L. H. Sigourney's[1] "Pleasant Memories of Pleasant Lands," published in 1842, she addressed the following sonnet to Miss Edgeworth, and made a very affectionate mention of her acquaintance with her. She met her during this winter in London. She says, —

"To have repeatedly met and listened to Miss Edgeworth, seated familiarly with her by the fireside, may seem to her admirers in America a sufficient payment for the hazards of crossing the Atlantic. Her conversation, like her writings, is varied, vivacious, and delightful. Her kind feelings towards our country are well known; and her forgetfulness of self, and happiness in making others happy, are marked traits in her character. Her person is small and delicately proportioned, and her movements full of animation. She has an aversion to having her likeness taken, which no entreaties of her friends have been able to overcome. In one of her notes she says, 'I have always refused even my own family to sit for my portrait, and, with my own good-will, shall never have it painted; as I do not think it would give either my friends or the public any representation or expression of my mind, such as I trust may be more truly found in my writings.' The ill health of a lovely sister, much younger than herself, at whose house in London she was passing the winter, called forth such deep anxiety, untiring attention, and fervent gratitude for every favorable symptom, as seemed to blend features of maternal tenderness with sisterly affection. It is always gratifying to find that those whose superior intellect charms and enlightens us have their hearts in the right place."

[1] Mrs. L. H. Sigourney, American writer, 1791–1865.

[To Miss Edgeworth.]

Truthful and tender as thy pictured page,
  Flows on thy life; and it was joy to me
To hear thy welcome 'mid my pilgrimage,
  And seat me by thy side, unchecked and free.

For in my own sweet land both youth and sire,
  The willing captives of thy love refined,
Will of thy features and thy form inquire,
  And lock the transcript in their loving mind

And merry children, who, with glowing cheek,
  Have loved thy "Simple Susan" many a day,
Will lift their earnest eyes to hear me speak
  Of her who held them ofttimes from their play,

And closer press, as if to share a part
Of the pure joy thy love enkindled in my heart.

LONDON, Monday, Jan. 25, 1841.

Miss Mary Sneyd died, at the age of ninety, in February of 1841, while Miss Edgeworth was in London. She sincerely mourned her death, and said of the loss she was to the family, "That poor, *uncentred*, desolate home at Edgeworthstown!"

Miss Edgeworth visited her friend Gerard Ralston at Croydon, and on her way home made a stay in Hatch Street, Dublin, and took Trim, too, on her way. She arrived at Edgeworthstown early in the summer. After her return she remarked, "The more I live, I see more and more the misery of uncultivated minds, and the happiness of the cultivated, when they can keep themselves free from the literary and scientific jealousies and party spirit."

Miss Edgeworth was interested in looking over

the "Essais" of Mlle. Mélun on "Castle Rackrent," and other subjects. She remarked on Thady's wiping the stairs with his wig. This was supposed by the French to be a customary thing in Ireland, and noticed as such many years before.

The following paragraph is from the "Life of W. H. Prescott," the historian.

"*March* 22, 1842.—My good friends the Ticknors received this last week a letter from Miss Edgeworth, containing a full *critique* on 'Ferdinand and Isabella,' which she had just been reading. She condemns my parallel of the English and Castilian queens, and also my closing chapter: the former as not satisfactory and full enough, and rather feeble; the latter as superfluous. I will quote two remarks of another kind: 'It is of great consequence, both to the public and private class of readers; and he will surely have readers of all classes, from the cottage and the manufactory to the archbishopric and the throne in England, and from Papal jurisdiction to the Russian Czar and the Patriarch of the Greek Church. The work will last,' etc. If Jupiter grants me half the prediction, I shall be pretty well off for readers. The other sentence is towards the end of the *critique:* 'Otherwise an individual ought not to expect that a single voice should be heard amidst the acclaim of universal praise with which his work has been greeted in Europe.' This from Miss Edgeworth.

"I never worked for the dirty lucre. Am I not right in treasuring up such golden opinions from such a source?"

Pakenham Edgeworth, who had been eleven years in India, returned home on leave this year; and the family assembled at Edgeworthstown to meet him.

In the spring of 1842 Miss Edgeworth was made an honorary member of the Royal Irish Academy.

In June of 1842 her friends, Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, made a visit at Edgeworthstown. They were collecting materials for a work on Ireland. Their description of the home of Miss Edgeworth and its surroundings is so good that I insert it here: —

"The county of Longford possesses few features of a distinctive character. It is generally flat, contains large districts of bog, and its northern boundaries are overlooked by remarkably sterile mountains. Its principal town — of the same name — is neat, clean, and well-ordered. It may be distinguished — and was so described by the estimable companion with whom we visited it — as 'the best-painted town in Ireland;' for the shops and houses are clean and trim, and partake very little of the negligence and indifference to appearances encountered too generally elsewhere. . . .

"Our principal object, in Longford County, was to visit Edgeworthstown, and to avail ourselves of the privilege and advantage of spending some time in the society of Miss Edgeworth. We entered the neat, nice, and pretty town at evening: all around us bore — as we had anticipated — the aspect of comfort, cheerfulness, good order, prosperity, and their concomitant, contentment. There was no mistaking the fact, that we were in the neighborhood of a resident Irish family, with minds to devise, and hands to effect, improvement everywhere within reach of their control.

"Edgeworthstown may almost be regarded as public property. From this mansion has issued so much practical good to Ireland, and not alone to Ireland, but the civilized world; it has been so long the residence of

high intellect, industry, well-directed genius, and virtue, — that we violate no duty by requesting our readers to accompany us thither, a place that, perhaps, possesses larger moral interest than any other in the kingdom.

"The demesne of Edgeworthstown is judiciously and abundantly planted, and the dwelling-house is large and commodious. We drove up the avenue at evening. It was cheering to see the lights sparkle through the windows, and to feel the cold nose of the house-dog thrust into our hands as an earnest of welcome; it was pleasant to receive the warm greeting of Mrs. Edgeworth; and it was a high privilege to meet Miss Edgeworth in the library, the very room in which had been written the immortal works that redeemed a character for Ireland, and have so largely promoted the truest welfare of humankind. We had not seen her for some years, — except for a few brief moments, — and rejoiced to find her in nothing changed; her voice as light and happy, her laughter as full of gentle mirth, her eyes as bright and truthful, and her countenance as expressive of goodness and loving-kindness, as they had ever been.

"Edgeworthstown was, and is, a large country mansion, to which additions have been from time to time made, but made judiciously. An avenue of venerable trees leads to it from the public road. It is distant about seven miles from the town of Longford. The only room I need specially refer to is the library: it belonged more peculiarly to Maria, although the general sitting-room of the family. It was the room in which she did nearly all her work; not only that which was to gratify and instruct the world, but that which, in a measure, regulated the household, — the domestic duties that were subjects of her continual thought: for the desk at which she usually sat was never without memoranda of matters from which

she might have pleaded a right to be held exempt. It is by no means a stately, solitary room, but large, spacious, and lofty, well stored with books, and 'furnished' with suggestive engravings. Seen through the window is the lawn, embellished by groups of trees. If you look at the oblong table in the centre, you will see the rallying-point of the family, who are usually around it, reading, writing, or working; while Miss Edgeworth, only anxious that the inmates of the house shall each do exactly as he or she pleases, sits in her own peculiar corner on the sofa: a pen, given her by Sir Walter Scott while a guest at Edgeworthstown (in 1825), is placed before her on a little, quaint, unassuming table, constructed, and added to, for convenience. She had a singular power of abstraction; apparently hearing all that was said, and occasionally taking part in the conversation, while pursuing her own occupation, and seemingly attending only to it. In that corner, and on that table, she had written nearly all the works which have delighted and enlightened the world. Now and then she would rise and leave the room, perhaps to procure a toy for one of the children, to mount the ladder and bring down a book that could explain or illustrate some topic on which some one was conversing: immediately she would resume her pen, and continue to write as if the thought had been unbroken for an instant. I expressed to Mrs. Edgeworth surprise at this faculty, so opposed to my own habit. 'Maria,' she said, 'was always the same: her mind was so rightly balanced, every thing so honestly weighed, that she suffered no inconvenience from what would disturb and distract an ordinary writer.'

"She was an early riser, and had much work done before breakfast. Every morning during our stay at Edgeworthstown she had gathered a bouquet of roses,

which she placed beside my plate at the table, while she was always careful to refresh the vase that stood in our chamber; and she invariably examined my feet after a walk, to see that damp had not induced danger; 'popping' in and out of our room with some kind inquiry, some thoughtful suggestion, or to show some object that she knew would give pleasure. It is to such small courtesies as these that we owe much of the happiness of life. Maria Edgeworth seemed never weary of thought that could make those about her happy; the impression thus produced upon us is as vivid to-day as it was twenty-five years ago.

"A wet day was a 'god-send' to us. She would enter our sitting-room, and converse freely of persons whose names are histories; and once she brought us a large box full of letters, — her correspondence with many great men and women, extending over more than fifty years, authors, artists, men of science, social reformers, statesmen, of all the countries of Europe, and especially of America, a country of which she spoke and wrote in terms of the highest respect and affection.

"Although we had known Miss Edgeworth in London, and, indeed, had often the honor of receiving her as a guest at our house, it will be readily understood how much more to advantage she was seen in her own home; she was the very gentlest of lions, the most unexacting, apparently the least conscious of her right to prominence. In London she did not reject, yet she seemed averse, to the homage accorded her. At home she was emphatically at home!

"Her contemporaries have not said much concerning her; indeed, of late years, she was but little seen out of Edgeworthstown: her visits to London being rare and brief. In person she was very small — she was 'lost in

a crowd.' Her face was pale and thin, her features irregular: they may have been considered plain, even in youth; but her expression was so benevolent, her manners were so perfectly well-bred, partaking of English dignity and Irish frankness, that one never thought of her with reference either to beauty or plainness. She ever occupied, without claiming, attention, charming continually by her singularly pleasant voice; while the earnestness and truth that beamed from her bright blue — very blue — eyes increased the value of every word she uttered. She knew how to *listen* as well as to *talk*, and gathered information in a manner highly complimentary to those from whom she sought it: her attention seemed far more the effect of respect than of curiosity. Her sentences were frequently epigrammatic: she more than once suggested to me the story of the good fairy, from whose lips dropped diamonds and pearls whenever they were opened. She was ever neat and particular in her dress, — a duty to society which literary women sometimes culpably neglect; her feet and hands were so delicate and small as to be almost childlike.[1] In a word, Maria Edgeworth was one of those women who do not seem to require beauty.

"Miss Edgeworth has been called 'cold;' but those who have so deemed her have never seen, as I have, the tears gather in her eyes at a tale of suffering or sorrow, nor heard the genuine, hearty laugh that followed the relation of a pleasant story. Never, so long as I live, can I forget the evenings spent in her library in the midst of a family, highly educated and self-thinking, in con-

[1] She once commissioned me to procure for her a pair of shoes from Melnotte's, in Paris; and when I handed the model to the shoemaker, I had difficulty in persuading him that it was not the shoe of a little girl.

versation unrestrained, yet pregnant with instructive thought." . . .

Miss Edgeworth wrote the Halls of their sketch of Edgeworthstown and her father: —

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, Nov. 7, 1842.

"I should be hard to please indeed" — "hard to please," impossible to please, if I were not satisfied now.

Believe me, very and only dear Mrs. Hall,

Your much obliged and grateful

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

The description of Edgeworthstown pleased the Edgeworths very much. The remainder of the sketch was not published till after Miss Edgeworth's death. The account of Edgeworthstown so pleased her that she wrote as follows, in December: —

"Mrs. Hall has sent me her last number, in which she gives Edgeworthstown. All the world here are pleased with it, and so am I. I like the way in which she has mentioned my father particularly. There is an evident kindness of heart, and care to avoid any thing that could hurt any of our feelings, and at the same time a warmth of affectionate feeling unaffectedly expressed, that we all like it, in spite of our dislike 'to that sort of thing.'"

I have placed part of Mrs. Hall's sketch of Miss Edgeworth in its proper place, as it was written in 1842, after this visit of June. But the reader will bear in mind that it was never seen by Miss Edgeworth; and her reference was simply to the brief description of the County Longford, and the place at Edgeworthstown.

Elgin Cottage Town
Oct 27th 1842

"I should be hard to please indeed
— "hard to please", impossible to
please if I were not satisfied
now.

Believe me, very truly dear
Mrs Hall, your much obliged & grateful
Marianne Elgin

CHAPTER XXI.

Severe Illness of Miss Edgeworth. — A Visit to Trim. — Frederika Bremer. — Lady Lansdowne's Character. — Last Visit to England. — Sydney Smith. — Observations of his on Maria's Conversation. — Pleasant Stay in London. — Trim. — Illness there. — Lady Georgiana Fullerton. — Armagh. — Lever's Tribute to Miss Edgeworth. — Maria's Interest in the Poor on the Estate. — Writes "Orlandino." — Remarks on Temperance. — Simpkins & Marshall ask for Prefaces to Maria's Collected Works. — Her Reply. — Mr. Prescott.

In January of 1843 Miss Edgeworth had a severe illness, a bilious fever, which prostrated her, and left her weak; and when she was able to travel, she went, in the spring, to Trim for a change of air and scene. While there she received a serenade from the temperance band and society. Father Mathew had set on foot the temperance movement, and signing pledge of total abstinence was the order of the day among the Irish peasantry. "Orlandino" was written by Miss Edgeworth with a desire to aid the good cause.

Miss Edgeworth hailed the advent of a new novelist in Frederika Bremer. She wrote in March from Trim, —

"Miss Bremer of Stockholm has published a novel, translated by Mary Howitt, which is one of the most interesting, new, and truly original books I have seen this quarter century." ("Our Neighbors.")

In writing Mrs. S. C. Hall, she said, —

"A book has much interested me: it is unlike any other book I ever read in my life, and yet true to nature in new circumstances. To be sure, I cannot judge of the circumstances or the narrative, never having been in the country; but the descriptions are full of life, and marked by that seal of genius which we recognize the instant we see it, obtains perfect credence from the reader, and hurries us on through the most romantic adventures, still domestic, and confined to a few persons not in number beyond the power of sympathy. One or two the most powerfully drawn may, perhaps, touch the bounds of impossibility. The book I mean has a title which does not do it justice, and which would rather lead one to expect a gossiping chronicle. It is called 'The Neighbors.' Its author, I understand, is a Miss Bremer of Stockholm; translated by Mary Howitt. And the best and most just praise I can give to her translation is, that one never from begining to end recollects her existence: never does it occur to our mind that it is a translation. Pray tell me if you know any thing of this author, and how I should address her at Stockholm.

"How very much one is obliged to the genius which can snatch one from one's self away, in times of great depression of spirits! — at those times when we are not wise enough to be able to give a *reason for particularly liking;* but the involuntary feeling is perhaps the most gratifying to a writer of benevolent heart, as well as superior genius.

. . . . . .

"I am afraid you are soaring above us. I read of such fine doings at the Rosery, such a grand breakfast on the marriage of Miss M——. But as she is good Irish, you are true to your national affections; and there may be room in your heart for all of us."

In another letter written about this time, she speaks of Dickens's "American Notes" as follows: —

"Dickens's 'America' is a failure: never trouble yourself to read it. Nevertheless, though the book is good for little, it gives me the conviction that the man is good for much more than I gave him credit for, — a real desire for the improvement of the lower classes; and this reality of *feeling* is, I take it, the secret, joined to his great power of human —— of his ascendant popularity."

Miss Edgeworth was pleased to think that she admired Lady Lansdowne, and "appreciated both her talents and her character," she said at this time, "before all the world found out that she was a *superior* person." She had excellent opportunities for studying the fine character of Lady Lansdowne early in that lady's life, in their first visit at Bowood, where she saw her domestic virtues and her mental abilities. She was a noble specimen of the high-born and well-bred Englishwoman of her day.

While at Trim, Miss Edgeworth received the announcement of Lucy Edgeworth's engagement to Dr. Robinson, the celebrated astronomer. At this time she took much pleasure in building a greenhouse for Mr. Butler, who was very fond of flowers.

In November of 1843 Miss Edgeworth went again to England, to visit her sister, Mrs. Wilson. She saw many old friends, — Lady Charleville, Lady Elizabeth Whitbread, the Lansdownes, — made the acquaintance of Sydney Smith, whose daughter was the second wife of her old friend Sir Henry Holland. She

met Sydney Smith at the Hollands, and spoke of out-Boswelling him. Lady Holland speaks of this as follows: —

"During her visit she saw much of my father; and her talents, as well as her love and thorough knowledge of Ireland, made her conversation peculiarly agreeable to him. I wish I had kept some notes of these conversations, which were very remarkable; but I have only a characteristic and amusing letter she wrote to me after her return home, from which the following is an extract: —

"'I have not the absurd presumption to think your father would leave London or Combe Florey for Ireland, *voluntarily;* but I wish some Irish bishopric were forced upon him, and that his own sense of national charity and humanity would forbid him to refuse. Then, obliged to reside among us, he would see, in the twinkling of an eye (such an eye as his), all our manifold grievances up and down the country. One word, one *bon-mot* of his, would do more for us, I guess, than Mr. ——'s four hundred pages, and all the like, with which we have been bored. One letter from Sydney Smith on the affairs of Ireland, with his *name* to it, and after having *been there*, would do more for us than his letters did for America and England: a bold assertion, you will say, and so it is. But I *calculate* that Pat is a far better subject for wit than Jonathan; it only plays round Jonathan's head: but it goes to Pat's heart, to the very bottom of his heart, where he loves it. And he don't care whether it is for or against him, so that it is *real* wit and fun. Now, Pat would dote upon your father, and kiss the rod with all his soul, he would; the lash just lifted, — when he'd see the laugh on the face, the kind smile, that would tell him it was all for his good.

"'Your father would lead Pat (for he'd never drive him) to the world's end, and maybe to common-sense at the end; might open his eyes to the true state of things and persons, and cause him to *ax* himself how it comes that, if he be so distressed by the Sassenach landlords that he can't keep soul and body together, nor one farthing for the wife and children, after paying the *rint* for the land, still and nevertheless he can pay King Dan's rint, *aisy?* — thousands of pounds, not for lands or potatoes, but just for castles in the air. Methinks I hear Pat saying the words, and see him jump to the conclusion that maybe the *gintleman*, his reverence, that "*has the way with him*,"[1] might be the man after all to do them all the good in life, and asking nothing at all from them. "Better, sure, than Dan, after all! and we will follow him through thick and thin. Why no? What he is, his reverence, the church — that is, our *cleargy* — won't object to him; for he never was an inimy any way, but always for paying them off handsome, and fools if they don't take it now. So down with King Dan, for he is no good! and up with Sydney, he's the *man*, king of glory!"

"'But, visions of glory, and of *good* better than glory, spare my longing sight! else I shall never come to an end of this *note*. *Note*, indeed! I beg your pardon.

"'Yours affectionately,

"'MARIA EDGEWORTH.'

"Miss Edgeworth says in one of her letters to her sister, after one of the evenings spent in my father's society, —

"'Delightful I need not say; but to attempt to Boswell

[1] This in reference to a reply of Dr. Doyle's to Mr. Smith, about a proposition of his to offer the Catholic priests an income: "Ah, Mr. Smith! you've such a way of putting things."

Sydney Smith's conversation would be out-Boswelling Boswell indeed.' "

Sydney Smith, in describing the impression made on him by his new friend, remarked, —

"Miss Edgeworth was delightful, so clever and sensible! She does not say witty things, but there is such a perfume of wit runs through all her conversation as makes it very brilliant."

This observation from Sydney Smith on the conversation of Miss Edgeworth shows that she was still, in spite of her advanced years, in full possession of all her remarkable powers of mind, and as agreeable as ever. Praise from Sydney Smith was "praise indeed."

Miss Edgeworth had tickets from Lady Byron, and two other friends among the peers, to visit the House on the occasion of Queen Victoria's opening Parliament in February, 1844; and she enjoyed the brilliant pageant and display very much.

Samuel Rogers, her old friend, she had many attentions from, and, in speaking of it, said of him, "dear, good-natured old man," in her affectionate manner. She always saw him much during her London visits. She dined with the Archbishop of Canterbury, at Lambeth Palace, and met there the Bishop of Lichfield, and Dean Milman of St. Paul's. She enjoyed the conversation of these eminent church dignitaries, and the "dear, simple, dignified, yet playful archbishop, who talked well of all things, from nursery rhymes to deep metaphysics and physics."

This was Miss Edgeworth's last visit to London. She returned to Ireland, and made a visit at Trim, where she was unfortunate in having an attack of her old enemy, erysipelas: she recovered from it in a short time, and was able, during her convalescence, to enjoy reading some new books. She found W. H. Prescott's "Mexico" "extremely interesting;" and among other books, of a lighter style, she names, —

"'Ellen Middleton,' by Lady Georgiana Fullerton, grand-daughter of the famous duchess-beauty of Devonshire; and whatever faults that duchess had, she certainly had genius. Do you recollect her lines on 'William Tell"? or do you know Coleridge's lines to her, beginning with, —

> 'O lady! nursed in pomp and pleasure,
> Where learned you that heroic measure?'

"Look for them, and get 'Ellen Middleton:' it is well worth your reading. Lady Georgiana certainly inherits her grandmother's genius; and there is a high-toned morality and religious principle throughout the book (where got she 'that heroic measure'?), without any cant or ostentation. It is the same moral I intended in 'Helen,' but exemplified in much deeper and stronger colors."

These remarks on "Ellen Middleton," and contrasting and comparing it with her own "Helen," rather in disparagement of herself and her work, show the generosity and impartiality of her mind, and her perfect freedom from literary envy and petty jealousy.

She made a visit in 1844 to her new brother-in-law and sister at the Observatory at Armagh, and was charmed with Dr. Robinson, saying, —

"Robinson at home is not less wonderful, and more agreeable even, than Robinson abroad: his *abondance* in literature equal to Mackintosh; in science, you know, out of sight, superior to everybody."

Surgeon-General Sir Philip Crampton showed Lever the remarks of Miss Edgeworth in praise of his former works; and when he published "Tom Burke," in 1845, he dedicated that book to her. He says he would not venture to dedicate an Irish novel to her, and he is "too sensible of" his "own inferiority" in that department. This dedication is a pleasant tribute to Ireland's gifted daughter. He writes: —

"I cannot resist the temptation of being, even thus, associated with a name, the first in my country's literature.

"Another motive I will not conceal: the ardent desire I have to asure you, that, amid the thousands you have made better and wiser and happier by your writings, you cannot count one who feels more proudly the common tie of country with you, nor more sincerely admires your goodness and your genius, than

"Your devoted and obedient servant,

"CHARLES J. LEVER."

Miss Edgeworth was much gratified by Mr. Lever's attention. She wrote him on the appearance of the "O'Donohue," and he expressed himself as encouraged by her kindly words of interest.

The year 1846 was one of much anxiety to Miss Edgeworth. Her brother Francis died in this year. Private grief and public distress made this time a busy one for Miss Edgeworth. This season saw the beginning of the disastrous famine of 1846–47.

Miss Edgeworth was always interested in the poor; and the villagers of Edgeworthstown owed much to her thoughtful, generous acts of kindness. For many years she took the care, in addition to her many other duties, of making up their letters, and sending them to their friends in America and elsewhere, that they might be properly delivered. When the famine came, she exerted herself to the utmost to secure the necessaries of life for the suffering people, and provided work, begged relief of others, and gave herself: she wrote a story for "Chambers's Miscellany" in order to add to the Poor Relief Fund. She had laid aside her pen for some time; but her strong desire to push on the good work of temperance, and the hope of adding a good contribution to her subscription for the suffering, were her incentives.

This little story formed the first of a series edited by William Chambers. Miss Edgeworth sympathized with Mr. Chambers in his desire to serve juvenile literature. This tale has Miss Edgeworth's usual peculiarities and excellences. She makes her children almost too self-denying and ready to give up. Few children are able to exercise the self-control and cheerful generosity of her little people. Orlandino, the hero, is rescued from debt, drunkenness, and ruin, by the children, who first see him at the beck and call of an unscrupulous circus-man-

ager. As Orlandino was a Protestant, the pledge of Father Mathew would not protect him. Miss Edgeworth takes occasion to expatiate eloquently on the beneficial influence of the good man's work: saying the reformation has lasted nine years; and, though lapses have occurred, "intemperance is no longer tolerated in good society."

"Since the time of the Crusades, never has one single voice awakened such moral energies; never was the call of one man so universally, so promptly, so long, obeyed. Never, since the world began, were countless multitudes so influenced and so successfully directed by one mind to one peaceful purpose. Never were nobler ends by nobler means attained."

She speaks of his simplicity, absence of all oratorical attempts, the forbearance from all that could touch the imagination, or rouse the passions, excite enthusiasm, or even produce what is called a *sensation.*

She strikes no uncertain note in favor of temperance, showing how necessary for some is total abstinence.

"Nothing less would break the habit. Tell him nothing else will do. Tell him that Father Mathew tried, and found that nothing less will do. Tell him that Dr. Johnson tried it, and said to one who was hesitating about giving up wine, 'Drink water, sir, and you are sure of yourself. If you drink wine, you never know how far it may carry you. I drink water. I now no more think of drinking wine than a horse does. The wine upon the table is no more for me than the dog that is under it.'"

Miss Edgeworth wrote Mr. Chambers that "Orlandino" must have no other title, and "it does not require or admit of any preface." Mme. Belloc had a copy of this little story for translation. Miss Edgeworth wrote the following, concerning its publication, in 1848, to her friend Mrs. S. C. Hall: —

"Chambers, as you always told me, acts very liberally. As this was to earn a little money for our parish poor, in the last year's distress, he most considerately gave prompt payment. Even before publication, when the proof-sheets were under correction, came the ready order on the Bank of Ireland. Blessings on him! and I hope he will not be the worse for me. I am surely the better for him, and so are numbers now working and eating; for Mrs. Edgeworth's principle and mine is to excite the people to work for good wages, and not, by gratis feeding, to make beggars of them, and ungrateful beggars, as the case might be.

. . . . . .

"I do not deserve the very kind, warm-hearted letter I have just received from you, dear Mrs. Hall; but I prize and like it all the better. So little standing upon ceremony, and so cordially off-hand and from the heart! Thank you for it with all *my* heart, and be assured it gave me heartfelt pleasure; and this I know will please you."

When Messrs. Simpkin & Marshall were preparing to publish Miss Edgeworth's collected works in 1847, they asked her to write prefaces for them in the way Sir Walter Scott had done for his novels. She answered them at length, and told them that her books were not of national interest, and her writings could not be thought of in comparison with those of Scott.

[To Messrs. Simpkin & Marshall.]

GENTLEMEN, — Accept my best thanks for your kindness in letting me know in time of your design of publishing a new edition of my novels and tales. I am further and highly obliged and gratified by your liberal intention of illustrating and "embellishing those works upon the plan of the present edition of the Waverley novels." I am fully sensible that even such writers as Walter Scott owe much of their popularity to the talents of the painter and engraver, especially in these modern days of literary luxury. How much more necessary must be the elegances of printing and external decoration to writers of inferior pretension! Without any affectation of humility, — which I despise and dislike more than frank vanity, — I cannot believe that any thing I could write as prefaces or notes to my stories could add to their value or interest with the public in any proportion to those of the Waverley novels; and I have too much honest pride to degrade myself by servile imitations, when I could not hope, by any effort, to catch the spirit or attain the value of the original.

Sir Walter Scott, skilful beyond all other writers in art of gracefully speaking of himself, possesses in those prefaces and notes peculiar advantages, which protect him from the offensive appearance of egotism. It is not of himself as an individual that he speaks, but of his country, of its historical traditions, and romantic legends. His novels are truly national: his elucidations are necessary to make national manners and language, and local or transitory customs, intelligible to the English reader even of the present day, and still more to those who will be delighted with his works in distant lands in future ages. The history of each of his fictitious narratives, traced from the first idea through all its variations and transformations to its final completion, is not only interesting and

useful as literary criticism to all readers and writers, but further, and in a higher sphere, is important to the philosopher and the metaphysician curious to learn the secret workings and processes of that mind which has raised Sir Walter Scott to a pre-eminence never before attained by any writer in his lifetime, and which has gained for him personally the sympathy of his country, from the cottage to the throne.

After this view, how can I return to speak of myself and of my works?

Of her father's prefaces she says, —

"In truth, I have nothing to say of them but what my dear father has said for me in his prefaces to each of them as they came out. They sufficiently explain the moral design: they require no national explanations, and I have nothing personal to add. As a woman, my life, wholly domestic, cannot afford any thing interesting to the public. I am like the needy knife-grinder, — I have no story to tell. There is, indeed, one thing I should have wished to tell, but that Sir Walter has so much better told it for me. I honestly glory in the thought, that my name will go down to posterity as his friend."

She thought it needless to show her own processes of thought, and the "secret workings" of her mind. But a description of the development of her intellectual powers, and something of a sketch of her original studies, and the gradual growth of a story as it formed itself in her mind, would have been most interesting to the reader; and it is to be regretted that she was not willing to give these prefaces to the publishers.

[To W. H. Prescott, Boston, U.S.A.]

EDGEWORTHSTOWN, Aug. 28, 1847.

DEAR SIR, — Your preface to your "History of the Conquest of Peru" is most interesting, especially that part which concerns the author individually. That delicate integrity which made him apprehend that he had received praise or sympathy from the world on false pretences converts what might have been pity into admiration; without diminishing the feeling for his suffering and his privations, against which he has so nobly, so perseveringly, so successfully, struggled. Our admiration and highest esteem now are commanded by his moral courage and truth.

What pleasure and pride — honest, proper pride — you must feel, my dear Mr. Prescott, in the sense of difficulty conquered, — of difficulties innumerable vanquished, — by the perseverance and fortitude of genius! It is a fine example to human nature, and will form genius to great works in the rising generation and in ages yet unborn.

What a new and ennobling moral view of posthumous fame! — a view which short-sighted, narrow-minded mediocrity cannot reach, and probably would call romantic, but which the noble-minded realize to themselves, and ask not either the sympathy or the comprehension of the commonplace ones. You need not apologize for speaking of yourself to the world. No one in the world, whose opinion is worth looking to, will ever think or call this "egotism," any more than they did in the case of Sir Walter Scott. Whenever he spoke of himself, it was with the same noble and engaging simplicity, the same endearing confidence in the sympathy of the good and true-minded, and the same real freedom from all vanity, which we see in your addresses to the public.

As to your judgments of the advantages peculiar to each of your histories, "The Conquest of Mexico," and "The Conquest of Peru," of course you, who have considered and compared them in all lights, must be accurate in your estimate of the facility or difficulty each subject presented; and you have well pointed out, in your preface to "Peru," the difficulty of making out a unity of subject, — where, in fact, the *first* unity ends, as we may dramatically consider it, at the third act, when the conquest of the Incas is effected; but not the conquest of Peru for Spain, which is the thing to be done. You have admirably kept the mind's eye upon this, the real end, and have thus carried on, and prolonged, and raised, as you carried forward, the interest sustained to the last moment, happily, by the noble character of Gasca, with which terminates the history of the mission to Peru.

You sustain with the dignity of a just historian your mottoes from Claudian and from Lope de Vega; and in doing this *con amore* you carry with you the sympathy of your reader. The cruelties of the Spaniards to the inoffensive, amiable, hospitable, trusting Peruvians and their Incas are so revolting, that, unless you had given vent to indignation, the reader's natural, irrepressible feelings would have turned against the narrator, in whom even impartiality would have been suspected of want of moral sense.

I wish that you could have gone further into that comparison or inquiry which you have touched upon, and so ably pointed out for further inquiry, — how far the want of political freedom is compatible or incompatible with happiness or virtue. You well observe that under the Incas this experiment was tried, or was trying, upon the Peruvians; and that the contrary experiment is now trying in America. Much may be *said*, but much more is to

be *seen*, on both sides of this question. There is a good essay by a friend of mine, perhaps of yours, the late Abbé Morellet, upon the subject of *personal* and *political* freedom. I wonder what your negroes would say touching the comforts of slavery. They seem to feel freedom a curse, when suddenly given; and, when unprepared for the consequences of independence, lie down with the cap of liberty pulled over their ears, and go to sleep or to death in some of our freed, lazy colonies, and the empire of Hayti. But I suppose time and motives will settle all this, and waken souls in black bodies as well as in white. Meanwhile, I cannot but wish you had discussed a little more this question, even if you had come upon the yet more difficult question of races, and their unconquerable or their conquerable or exhaustible differences. Who could do this so well?

I admire your adherence to your principle of giving evidence in your notes and appendices for your own accuracy, and allowing your own opinions to be re-judged by your readers in furnishing them with the means of judging which they could not otherwise procure, and which you, having obtained with so much labor and so much favor from high and closed sources, bring before us gratis with such unostentatious candor and humility.

I admire and favor, too, your practice of mixing biography with history; genuine sayings and letters by which the individuals give their own character and their own portraits. And I thank you for the quantity of information you give in the notices of the principal authorities to whom you refer. These biographical notices add weight and value to the authorities, in the most agreeable manner; though I own that I was often mortified by my own ignorance of the names you mention of great men, your familiars. You have made me long to have known your

admirable friend, Don Fernandes de Navarrete, of whom you make such honorable and touching mention in your preface. . . .

I yesterday sent . . . a parcel . . . to Mr. Ticknor. In it I have put, addressed to the care of Mr. Ticknor, a very trifling offering for you, my dear sir, which, trifling as it is, I hope and trust your good-nature will not disdain, — half a dozen worked *marks* to put in books; and I intended those to be used in your books of reference when you are working, as I hope you are, or will be, at your *magnum opus*, — the "History of Spain." One of these marks, that which is marked in green silk, "Maria E——, for Prescott's works"! is my own handiwork, every stitch; in my eighty-first year, — eighty-two almost: I shall be eighty-two the 1st of January. I am proud of being able, even in this trifling matter, to join my young friends in this family in working *souvenirs* for the great historian.

Believe me, my dear Mr. Prescott, your much obliged and highly gratified friend, and admiring reader and *marker*,

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

CHAPTER XXII.

Miss Edgeworth's continued Interest in Literature. — Lady Cecilia Clarendon. — Mrs. Wilson's Death. — Note in Macaulay's History on Maria. — Maria's Letter about a Severe Illness. — Lines to Ireland. — Maria's Gift to the Irish Porters. — Maria's Sudden Illness. — Death. — Her Wishes. — Her Habits. — Her Disposition. — Her Mental Training. — Intellect. — Notes. — Methods of Work. — Summary. — Character and Influence.

MISS EDGEWORTH continued to interest herself in literature and the books of the day. Of "Granby Manor" she wrote, that she enjoyed it very much: "It is beautifully written, pathetic, without the least exaggeration of feeling or affectation."

When Lamartine was writing his "Histoire des Girondins," he wanted some information about the Abbé Edgeworth, of whom Sneyd Edgeworth had written a Life some years before. Miss Edgeworth gave Mr. Lamartine what he needed; and she was not at all pleased with "a note from that most conceited and not over-well-bred M. de Lamartine," adding, "What an egotist and what a puppy it is! But the ovation has turned his head."

Some inquiries were made as to the color of "Lady Cecilia Clarendon's[1] eyes," and she wrote that when she last saw Lady Cecilia "her eyes were blue;" and she adds, that she is "highly gratified by finding

[1] Helen.

that my dear Lady Cecilia's eyes still continue to interest sufficiently to have a question as to their color."

The last of Miss Edgeworth's life was saddened by the death of her favorite half-sister, Mrs. Le Stock Wilson ("Fanny"). She was deeply attached to all her half brothers and sisters, but Fanny was particularly beloved by her. She died after a short illness, and the shock was much felt by Maria.

Mr. Hall, in speaking of the last time he ever met Miss Edgeworth, says, —

"The last time we saw her was at the house of her sister, Mrs. Wilson (now also departed), in North Audley Street. She was, of course, a centre of attraction: the heated room and many 'presentations' seemed to weary her. *We*, of course, were seldom near her in the crowd; and, as we were bidding her good-by, she made us amends by whispering, 'We will make up for this at Edgeworthstown.' Alas! that was not to be: not long afterwards she returned to Edgeworthstown, and was suddenly called from earth.

"In one of her letters to Mrs. Hall (who wrote to her on her birthday every year during several years), she says, 'Your cordial, warm-hearted note was the very pleasantest I received on my birthday, except those from my own family. You must not delay long in finding your way to Edgeworthstown if you mean to see me again. Remember, you have just congratulated me on my eighty-second birthday.'"

Lord Macaulay's biographer says, —

"Among all the incidents connected with the publication of his history, nothing pleased Macaulay so much as

the gratification that he contrived to give Maria Edgeworth as a small return for the enjoyment which, during more than forty years, he had derived from her charming writings.[1] That lady, who was then in her eighty-third winter, and within a few months of her death, says in the course of a letter to Dr. Holland, 'And now, my good friend, I require you to believe that all the admiration I have expressed of Macaulay's work is quite uninfluenced by the self-satisfaction, vanity, pride, surprise, I had in finding my own name in a note! I had formed my opinion, and expressed it to my friends who were reading the book to me, before I came to that note.[2] Moreover, there was a mixture of shame, and a twinge of pain, with the pleasure and pride I felt in having a line in this immortal history given to *me*, when there is no mention of Sir Walter Scott throughout the work, even in places where it seems impossible that the historian could resist paying the becoming tribute which genius owes, and loves to pay, to genius. Perhaps he reserves himself for the '45, and I hope in heaven it is so. Meanwhile be so good as to make my grateful and deeply felt thanks to the great author for the honor which he has done me.' "

After Maria's dangerous illness a few years before her death, she said to a friend, —

"And, now it is all over, I thank God not only for my recovery, but for my illness. In very truth, and with-

[1] "Macaulay on one occasion pronounces that the scene in The Absentee, where Lord Colambre discovers himself to his tenantry and to their oppressor, is the best thing of the sort since the opening of the twenty-second book of the Odyssey."

[2] "This note is in the sixth chapter, at the bottom of the page describing the habits of the old native Irish proprietors in the seventeenth century: 'Miss Edgeworth's King Corny belongs to a later and much more civilized generation; but whoever has studied that admirable portrait can form some notion of what King Corny's great-grandfather must have been.' "

out the least exaggeration or affectation or sentiment, I declare, that, on the whole, my illness was a source of more pleasure than pain to me; and I would willingly go through all the fever and weakness to have the delight of the feelings of warm affection, and the consequent unspeakable sensations of gratitude. When I felt that it was more than probable that I should not recover, with a pulse above a hundred and twenty, and at the entrance of my seventy-sixth year, I was not alarmed: I felt ready to rise tranquil from the banquet of life, where I had been a happy guest; I confidently relied on the goodness of my Creator."

And again, a few weeks only before her death, she wrote: —

"Our pleasures in literature do not, I think, decline with age: last 1st of January was my eighty-second birthday, and I think that I had as much enjoyment from books as ever I had in my life."

Only a few weeks before her death, Miss Edgeworth addressed the following lines to her beloved country. They were written early in May.

"Ireland, with all thy faults, thy follies too,
I love thee still: still with a candid eye must view
Thy wit, too quick, still blundering into sense,
Thy reckless humor, sad improvidence,
And even what sober judges follies call,
I, looking at the heart, forget them all."

Miss Edgeworth was much touched by the generosity of the porters who carried the supplies to the vessels loaded by American liberality for Ireland during the famine; and, hearing that these poor men

refused to accept any payment for their services in the good work, she knit with her own hands a woollen comforter of bright colors for every man. They were proud and grateful for the remembrance, but before these gifts reached their destination the generous giver was no more.

The latter part of Miss Edgeworth's life was passed mostly at Edgeworthstown, alternating with long visits at the rectory of Trim. The society of Mr. Butler, himself a well-known scholar and antiquarian, was very attractive and congenial to Maria.

Trim is in the neighborhood of Laracor, famed for its associations with Dean Swift and Stella, and near by is the birthplace of the Duke of Wellington, Dangan Castle.

Miss Edgeworth was expected at Trim when the news of her death arrived, so sudden and unexpected was her last illness. She drove out, in her usual health, a few hours before her death. She was suddenly seized with a pain in the region of the heart, and felt languid and oppressed. With her consent, a letter was written to her friend, the skilful physician, Sir Henry Marsh, summoning him for advice; but, shortly after, she expired, May 22, 1849, without a struggle, in the arms of her stepmother.

Miss Edgeworth had often in her latter years expressed a desire that she might die at home, be spared a long illness out of consideration to the family, and that Mrs. Edgeworth might be by her side at the last: all these wishes were fulfilled, and her death was as painless as possible. To the very latest hour of her life, she was fortunate in being in full

possession of her faculties. Her brilliant mind was clear and vigorous to the last. She was never very strong, never equal to much exercise: but she was favored to the end with average health; her spirits were unfailing; and her pleasure in life and the daily occupations with which she busied herself was something wonderful.

During the years, after the publication of "Helen," which preceded her death, she made some notes for a story, "Take for Granted," and wrote "Orlandino;" but she was wise enough to feel that she had passed the time for producing original work. She rested her fame on work well done, and did not trifle with the public estimation by offering inferior compositions to her readers. There are few authors who can resist the temptation of publishing. She was early trained to wait: during the years previous to her first appearance as a writer, with her little venture called "Letters for Literary Ladies," she wrote much, as we have seen, but was content to reserve her powers for the instruction and amusement of her own family and friends.

Miss Edgeworth, in writing to Mrs. Inchbald, said she was her own Rosamond in "Patronage:" witty, vivacious, impetuous, generous-hearted Rosamond was said by her family and friends to be her own counterpart. Undoubtedly she had all the impetuosity, frankness, animation, and warmth of feeling, of this character. Her tears were easily excited by a tale of woe: some amusing anecdote brought smiles, or a pleasant event made her happy. She had, however, the noble qualities of Caroline Percy as well.

She was far-sighted, prudent, and high-spirited. She had great self-control, and could, as occasion required, exercise this power. She forced herself to write "Ormond" by the bedside of her dying father, and refused M. Edelcrantz because she felt it was the wisest thing she could do, though her heart and fancy were deeply engaged. She was ever careful to attend to the practical details and petty affairs of every-day life, and could turn from the imaginary scenes of a novel, or the bright and profound conversation of wits and philosophers, to arrange her sisters' costumes, as they visited in Continental or English society, at home was the business manager of her father's estate, the overseer of village affairs, almoner to the poor, and, as we have seen, their best friend and adviser in their affairs.

She did not disdain the smallest occupation, and found in little pleasures much to relieve and invigorate her mind. Home was ever to her the dearest place, the haven to which she turned. We have seen her admired, sought, and courted by wits, philosophers, women of fashion and culture. The greatest minds and people of rank alike vied with their homage and respect; but these attentions never turned her head, or for a moment allured her from the simple pleasures of a domestic life. She returned as readily from the "brilliant panorama of London," and the *salons* of Paris, to the "plain living and high thinking" of the home in Ireland, and the little cares incident to the life at Edgeworthstown, as she went. If the contrast between the well-ordered mansions of England, the elegance of Paris,

MISS EDGEWORTH'S LIBRARY.

and Edgeworthstown, struck her, her affection for home and its surroundings was strong enough to compensate for all deficiencies she saw in Ireland. As she always said, she "loved" Ireland; and, much as she deplored the poverty and squalor which she made it her life-long object to ameliorate, she found the charms of home and family sufficient, nay more, — a large reward for the loss of the polish of English life, or the brilliancy of Paris.

In her own home, Miss Edgeworth was cheerful, sympathetic, and gay. When her sisters were with her in Paris, one of them wrote of Maria: "We often wonder what her admirers would say, after all the profound remarks and brilliant witticisms they have listened to, if they heard all her delightful nonsense with us," and she turned with readiness from the company of *savants* and philosophers to arrange a party of pleasure for her young sisters, or perhaps advise about the style of a new dress.

Miss Edgeworth was extremely small of stature, and her figure continued slight and erect to the last. She was active and alert in her movements, and always ready to take steps for others. Her countenance was exceedingly plain, and she was unpretending in her whole appearance. No one could meet and converse with her, without forgetting the plainness of face, in the spirit, benevolence, and genius which irradiated and played over her features, as she listened sympathetically to some story of suffering, laughed at a good anecdote, or told in her witty and animated style some Irish tale, or imitated the peculiarities of some brilliant orator like Mira-

beau, or the great Mrs. Siddons. In 1831 Miss Edgeworth said, "Nobody is ugly now but myself," and all through life she was conscious of her plainness, but could hardly have realized that her friends and admirers would gladly look upon the genius in the face without regard to the lack of beauty of feature, when she so resolutely persisted in refusing to sit for a picture.[1]

She was fastidiously neat in her dress, and methodical in her habits, and the love of order, early impressed upon her by Mrs. Honora Edgeworth, was of immense value to her all through life. For order and method judiciously managed gave her time to do many and very various kinds of work. She could turn from her well-arranged writing, to give some order about her repairs or village charity work, superintend her garden, and settle accounts, without destroying the continuity of thought or marring the dialogue of her stories. Undoubtedly she had rare powers of concentration and a very uncommon memory, aided also by a fine power of discrimination in the use of material; but when one considers that she wrote in the large family sitting-room, which was also a library and the general meeting-place of guests and business visitors, the admiration for her talents is increased. For a long time Miss Edgeworth used a little desk in this room, on which, two years before her father's death, he inscribed the following words: —

[1] The picture I use is supposed to have been taken from a sketch by an artist who caught the likeness at some public place during her first London season.

"On this humble desk were written all the numerous works of my daughter, Maria Edgeworth, in the common sitting-room of my family. In those works, which were chiefly written to please me, she has never attacked the personal character of any human being, or interfered with the opinions of any sect or party, religious or political: while endeavoring to inform and instruct others, she improved and amused her own mind, and gratified her heart, which I do believe is better than her head.

"R. L. E."

After Mr. Edgeworth's death she used a writing-desk which had belonged to him; and it was placed on a table of his construction, to which she added a bracket for her candlestick, and other little conveniences. It was easily rolled near the fire in winter, and in summer could be placed behind the pillars of the library by a window, where she enjoyed the air.

Miss Edgeworth was an early riser; and in the morning, after a cup of coffee, usually walked, as before stated, for some time. She came into the breakfast-room in summer with her hands full of flowers; and sat with the family at the table, though she ate very little. She had some work always to busy herself with, and, on the arrival of the mail-bag, took much interest in reading her letters, and listened to the news of the day; but she never was a politician, though she took pleasure in the general progress of affairs.

After breakfast she sat down to write, and worked till luncheon-time; and after that meal occupied herself with some needlework, as experience taught her that writing immediately after eating was bad

for her. At times her anxiety about a certain piece of work, an interesting dialogue, or some half-finished character or scene, made her very unwilling to defer her writing; but this was her rule. A drive in the afternoon, in later years, was a pleasant relaxation: in early life she rode with her father, but natural timidity about horses made her a poor horsewoman. The rest of the day was passed much as other ladies pass their time. She dined, took tea with the family, and passed the evening in conversation, or listening to reading. In this way she passed her time, when it was unbroken by visits. She worked so systematically and regularly many hours of the day when at home, that she could easily spare the necessary time for visits, and the complete change they made.

Miss Edgeworth, while at Trim, in her eighty-third year, not long before her death, wrote by dictation some reminiscences. She said, —

"I recollect a number of literary projects, if I may so call them, or *aperçus* of things which I might have written if I had had time or capacity so to do. The word *aperçu* my father used to object to. 'Let us have none of your *aperçus*, Maria: either follow a thing out clearly to a conclusion, or do not begin it; begin nothing without finishing it."

She followed this advice, she says, but notes down some of the many temptations she had to neglect it; among them Sir Thomas Browne's "Vulgar Errors."

"It might be useful [she says] and entertaining to look over this book, and mark what errors yet remain

that deserve to be called vulgar, and what have been established as truths; also to examine whence the errors, supposed to be such, arose; and to '*bring forward*' to posterity 'arrears outstanding.'

"To take a larger scope in the same range, it might be well to look at Bacon's 'Pyramid of Knowledge,' and note what progress has been made under each division, and what new divisions, or headings, have been made in consequence of new openings and new discoveries."

Also take

"The history of the imagination as well as science.

"In looking at Bacon's 'Pyramid of Knowledge,' the task of examining and reporting on each division appears too vast for any mind but the mind of him who first sketched that 'Pyramid;' but even the commencing such an undertaking may be useful as encouraging other minds to assist. The slightest light thrown, making the darkness visible, points out at least where we may attempt to penetrate to dispel that obscurity."

Does not know of any advance to note in metaphysics, except

"The doctrine of association, originally noticed by Aristotle, may be termed new in the more extended signification in which it has been used by Hartley, Priestly, Hume; but how far it has been usefully applied to education remains to be shown. Upon its revival, this principle seems to have been much over-valued, and, as Sir Walter Scott humorously observed, to have been used as 'a sort of metaphysical pick-lock.' It seems to have been forgotten, in the zeal for the power of association, that there must be something to associate with, some

original capacity of feeling or pleasure, probably different in different minds.

"Look over Bentham to consider whether any advance has been made by him since Hume, respecting the principle of utility, as applied either to morals or legislation. There is a slight 'Review' on this subject, written by myself, which may be worth looking at; as Sir Samuel Romilly approved of it as being, at the time it was written, the most concise statement he had seen of the principle of utility, as applied to crimes and punishments. Of Dumont's Bentham 'Sur les Récompenses,' many new ideas have been stolen unacknowledged from it by members of Parliament and others, and *plated* out for their own purposes.

. . . . . .

"With regard to the whole system, founded on the principle of utility, it should be observed that it is more a question of words than has hitherto in the discussion been observed, even by philosophers. If each party were to define intelligibly and exactly what they mean by the word 'utility,' the dispute must come to an end. Hitherto the enemies, as they call themselves, of the principle, disregarding derivation, assume that the word 'utility' can be used only in a restricted sense; as we say a chair is useful to sit upon, not considering what may be useful to human happiness in general, or in giving pleasure, independently of doing service. In this view of the subject, the beautiful, and all that relates to taste, they distinguish from the useful; and they have fair play for ridicule well exemplified in Mme. de Staël's raillery against Dumont, and the system of utility in her 'Considerations,' where she asks the philosopher whether beautiful landscapes, etc., are useful. The defenders of the principle of utility have not yet sufficiently pointed out

its exact definition. Dumont employs the word 'utility' as every thing which is conducive to human happiness or human pleasure; referring to his list enumerating such pleasures, temporal pleasures, both of the senses and the intellect, it seems he would also include religious happiness, or the hope of happiness in a future state, as being conducive to our happiness at present. This he does not distinctly state, but infers it; as in his system there is, he declares, nothing contrary to religion, only contrary to persecution, which, producing evil, comes under the head of pains."

Miss Edgeworth was interested in political economy, and in this same paper of notes she said she questioned how the present state of Ireland was affected by the potato.

"I recollect that in Berkeley's 'Querist' there is this inquiry: 'Whether potatoes have been a blessing or an evil to Ireland?' and, as well as I can recollect, another of his queries is, 'What would be the consequence to Ireland if potatoes ceased to be the national food?'

"I have some excellent letters of my dear deceased friend Mr. Ricardo, which bear upon this subject, and which state what ought to be the desideratum for the food of a nation: such as, storability; not to be the lowest price, that something may be had to fall back upon in case of crops failing; food that requires industry, not to be scratched out of the earth like pignuts."

She compares Scott's and Johnson's Lives, one of the novelists, the second of the poets, "curious to mark the difference between criticism by one himself an artist in one particular line of fiction, and one only eminent in general literature, but not possess-

ing the imaginative or inventive faculty. Johnson's superior *learning*, in the common acceptation of the term, hardly compensates for his want of imagination as to descriptive poetry, and the beauties of nature, or as to the graphic power of representing human character, and of combining incidents." She considered the asperity of Johnson, and false indulgence or flattery of Scott, alike to be condemned. Scott was singularly free from envy and jealousy: he said, "I would as soon cherish a toad in my bosom."

Her sketches were written in small, narrow books, like check-books, and, indeed, often sewed into the empty cover of a check-book, or stamped receipt-book.

As the reader will have observed, she made many changes. As in "Patronage," before its publication she took out the Irish absentee family, and made a separate story of it; and again, after "Patronage" was published, she changed some parts of it. Sometimes her stories were worked over, and the plot completely altered, as in "Helen," where she made no original plan or groundwork. Some of the tales were little altered from their first conception. In "Ennui" and "Vivian" the stories followed almost exactly the original sketches.

Besides these sketches, she had note-books, small, and of the usual note-book shape, in which she entered any thing which struck her as affording material for thought or composition. So early in life did she begin these notes, that the first, dated 1780, is written in her childish round-hand.

[Note-book, 1780.]

"*McCulloch, Western Isles.* — On the mountains — degrees of cold — whiskey in cup mixed with hailstones — quicksilver sank into the bulb.

"*For Harry and Lucy.* — Boy going under archway, saw horse could go but not self; caught hold of bar above, and clung.

"*Star, December, 1801.* — Trial of Tailor and Simcox. Coachman would sleep on box; gentleman snatched plate from coach; at trial coachy turning the tables on him for stealing plate; taken to Giltspur-street Compter; damages one shilling."

Entries were made just as she found things to interest her in a miscellaneous way; and "by some process of memory," as she says, she knew long after where to find them.

It is difficult, in leaving the subject of Miss Edgeworth's method of work, and her deference to her father's advice and counsel in the construction of her novels and tales, to let the opportunity pass for a consideration of his influence over her mind. There is no more extraordinary case on record, of the subjection of one mind to another, than this. An original genius of the highest order is seen pressed into the service of a clever, ingenious, but self-satisfied and restless intellect; and it is further burdened with sentiments of filial devotion and respect.

The whole influence of Mr. Edgeworth in behalf of method, industry, and constant application, was good; but what would have been the career of his gifted daughter, unhampered by the treadmill in

which the self-assertion and domineering criticism of her father condemned her to work? Pity and conjecture are alike wasted in regret at the manner in which Mr. Edgeworth made her write, or in fancying what her life would have been untrammelled by the mental foot-rule which he applied to her soaring genius and gay imagination.

The natural modesty and timid disposition of Maria made her place implicit confidence in her father's judgment. Concentration and humor, unusual in a woman's work, which is too often diffusive and sentimental, she owed largely to his early supervision of her studies. Humor he could not give, but he had enough himself to foster the bias of his daughter's mind. She was indebted to him for the remarkable ability to concentrate and conserve her mental forces. Masculine and feminine qualities of mind were thus hers in an unusual degree.

Mr. Edgeworth had a love of petty detail: he carried into literature the same views which made him say that a child should not read any thing it could not perfectly comprehend. He had not considered sufficiently the saying of the French writer, "Le secret d'ennuyer est celui de tout dire."

Miss Edgeworth was a devout and consistent member of the Church of England, and a constant attendant at her parish church. She was constantly attacked, during her lifetime, by critics who asserted that she made morality her highest object. Robert Hall, after greatly praising her writings, laments that they contain no allusions to religion; saying, "She does not attack religion, or inveigh against it, but

makes it appear unnecessary by exhibiting perfect virtue without it."

To those who made such strictures, the question might have well been put: What is perfect virtue without the essence of religion? how can a person be perfectly virtuous without any religious belief? I think Miss Edgeworth meant to inculcate the highest sentiments of religion, which were not dependent upon creed or dogma, the pure essence of faith in "things unseen and spiritual;" and that, as she abstained from profaning the highest human love by passionate descriptions of lovers' vows, she felt that to indicate the virtues was to convey, to the reader of fine intelligence, practical views of religion.

She was intimate with many Churchmen, and the bright and shining lights of the Church paid homage to her genius and her good influence. Archbishop Whately, in his "Annotations of Bacon's Essays," has an allusion to Miss Edgeworth, in which he makes the same criticism as Robert Hall, and enters at length into the want of artistic excellence this causes. All minds have their limitations, and that of Miss Edgeworth was no exception to this rule. For what she gave the literature of her country we must be grateful, and accept the books she gave us — she gave us of her best.

If ever a life could be called "a prayer," that of Miss Edgeworth was such in its aspiration and inspiration. Her earnest desire was to do good, to be to many the means of uplifting and cheering suffering humanity.

Miss Edgeworth was emphatically a representative

of the utilitarian ideas which Bentham recognized as the great movement of the last century. The reaction from the old mediæval ideas and formulas was a violent one, and the natural outgrowth of modern civilization and development. As the incoming tide washes away the *débris* left by the former waves, the century of the French Revolution saw vast changes in action and thought. Miss Edgeworth was a progressive and modern thinker. She embodied in her novels the spirit of the modern movement, among whose leaders she may be named. She had a positive influence on society, manners, and literature.

Macaulay called her "the second woman of her age," counting Mme. de Staël as the first; and another writer said of her influence, "Miss Edgeworth has done more good, both to the higher and lower world, than any writer since the days of Addison." Sir James Mackintosh said he should require "for Botany Bay a code from Bentham, and 'Popular Tales' from Miss Edgeworth." In "Fors Clavigera" for May, 1876, John Ruskin, after some excellent hints on dress for young girls, tells his readers, if they have never seen "Parent's Assistant," to ask their parents to buy it for them; and advises all to read "the little scene between Miss Somers and Simple Susan, in the draper's shop." In American and English literature, there are constant allusions to the characters of Miss Edgeworth's tales and novels. She has left the indelible impress of genius on our literature. She had also a Continental reputation.

Her respect for the simple and daily virtues has often been remarked. It has been truly said, that great virtues are easy to write of, but to make the minor qualities interesting, and yet show marked power in handling larger themes, is unusual. She said in "Helen," "Whoever makes truth disagreeable commits high treason against virtue;" and her writings are full of just such homely truths, attractively presented. Sir Walter Scott said once of her, "Some one has described the novels of Miss Edgeworth as a *sort of essence* of common-sense; and the definition is not inappropriate."

W. S. Landor, in the "Imaginary Conversations" of the dead and living, pays a pleasant compliment to Miss Edgeworth's writings.

Among the latest sketches of Miss Edgeworth's life and writings (nothing larger has yet been attempted) is one very amusing and blundering description in "Illustrious Irishwomen," by E. Owens Blackburn. Miss Kavanagh has a brief account of her; and the latest mentions of her are in "The Literary History of England," by Mrs. Oliphant (a critical sketch of "Castle Rackrent"), and, by "The Cornhill Magazine" for this month, which has a pleasant and sketchy account, from the pen of a well-known writer.

The reviews, magazines, and papers of the day contained most tender and affectionate notices of Miss Edgeworth; and her death was mourned on both sides of the Atlantic as a public loss. One writer said of her, "No man or woman in this generation needs to be told of the surpassing excellence of her various writings; and then entered into a glowing

eulogium of her public and private virtues. Sweet and well-merited words of praise echoed from America. One notice said, —

"This admirable writer has long enjoyed a reputation like the calm unbiased judgment of posterity. She lived to see her works pass from the regions of transient popularity to that of permanent fame."

An Irish poetess, in announcing to a friend the death of Miss Edgeworth, said, —

"I feel it difficult to express my deep regret for Miss Edgeworth's sudden and totally unexpected death. You cannot well imagine the charm of her society, or the attraction of her manners and superior sense. She was never occupied by self. One was sure of pleasing her, in whatever way they essayed the trial: she would laugh like an Irishwoman in exuberant enjoyment of any pleasant subject. Her warm-hearted benevolence, aided by her warm-hearted love of country, was delightful."

Old age is rarely seen in a more beautiful aspect than in Miss Edgeworth's life. She was neither narrowed nor depressed by the chilling influences of the years which brought with them the loss of friends and many changes. She retained to the last her generous heart, her clear mental vision; and her serene hope in humanity, and her faith for the future, cheered her spirits and elevated her imagination.

The life of this gifted woman is a pleasant study of all that is best and brightest in human experience. She was amiable, affectionate, genuine, and brilliant.

Her character presents a rare combination of excellent qualities; and it is easy to gather from the various testimony of friends and contemporaries, that the woman was as true as her writings. In all the relations of life she was respected and beloved.

APPENDIX.

THE MENTAL THERMOMETER.[1]

BY MISS MARIA EDGEWORTH.

THE Eastern style of allegory and narrative, of which there are so many examples in the "Spectator" and "Adventurer," was once a favorite with the public. There was too much of it: it went out of fashion, and has of late been considered as suited only to juvenile taste. Perhaps, for the sake of variety, it may now and then be again permitted in periodical publications. There appears something of Oriental style and invention in the following fiction, which was intended to turn popular attention to a curious problem in the history of the human mind, — a problem which has long been discussed, but which has hitherto been unsolved, by metaphysicians, — whether different people feel the same positive degrees of pain or pleasure with equal intensity; whether all men have the same capacity for happiness or misery. It seems further to suggest a moral idea, — that many were led to pursue what others falsely call PLEASURE, merely from their want of power of comparing and reflecting on their own feelings, and thus of deciding for themselves in what their real happiness consists.

[1] Friendship's Offering; or, The Annual Remembrance. 1835. Lupton Relfe, 13 Cornhill, London.

"My father was a merchant of considerable opulence, and of established credit, in the city of London. The habits of circumspection and frugality, which are insensibly acquired in the pursuit of wealth, had neither soured his temper, nor contracted his natural benevolence; but on the contrary he found himself, as he advanced in years, not only in the possession of an ample fortune, but blessed with a mind capable of enjoying and sharing it with his fellow-creatures. The fame of his liberality drew around him numbers who were in want of his assistance; and his discernment in distinguishing those who were proper objects of his bounty obtained for him the notice and friendship of many who were disinterested admirers of his virtues. Among those of the latter description, I can remember from my childhood an elderly gentleman who had the air and accent of a foreigner; who, after having casually met and conversed with my father in several places of public resort, seemed particularly to solicit his acquaintance. My father was equally anxious of cultivating his society; and by degrees a friendship arose between them, which continued without interruption during the remainder of my father's life, and which, after his death, seemed to devolve upon me, his only son. Indeed, I had ever been ambitious of ingratiating myself with this person, and of deserving his esteem; for I thought that he possessed a singular sagacity in judging and deciding upon the secret motives of human actions. I was but a very young boy when I first saw him, but even then I was struck with his appearance. He had a remarkable serenity of aspect, and a general expression of benevolence in his countenance, but an eye which guilt could not withstand, which seemed to penetrate with a glance into the inmost recesses of the human heart. Whenever he fixed it upon me, I well remember the awe

which it diffused over my whole frame, — an awe which even the consciousness of innocence could not dispel. What his thoughts of me were in those moments, I know not; but the reserve of his manner towards me was gradually dissipated, and he began to admit and to encourage my childish conversation and familiarity. He had been a great traveller, and had acquired an amazing fund of knowledge, which he perfectly well knew how to dispense in conversation so as to entertain and instruct. When I was a child he would often take me between his knees, and tell me marvellous stories, such as were fit to rouse my curiosity, and fix my attention; blending at the same time useful knowledge and moral truths with his narratives, and infusing, as it were, wholesome nourishment with delicacies the most grateful to my palate.

"As I grew older, he instructed me in the sciences in which he was most profoundly versed. Indeed, at times I could not avoid suspecting that his knowledge in the mysteries of nature was even greater than he thought it prudent to avow. I had a confused idea of secrets equally valuable and dangerous. This idea increased my reverence; but I never ventured to hint it to him, lest I might by an idle curiosity offend him, or lose his company and friendship. He continued, this subject excepted, to treat me with the most unreserved confidence, till the time of my father's death, when I looked up to him as the only friend who could console me for my loss.

"At this time, when my heart was softened with grief and disposed to solitude, he took me with him to a retirement at some distance from the metropolis. It was a charming spot, rich in all the beauties of nature, and highly cultivated by art.

"After any irreparable misfortune has been severely felt, a species of mental calm succeeds. I now experi-

enced a kind of philosophic melancholy, which, though somewhat painful, I was fond of cherishing. It was one of those thoughtful moments, towards the close of evening, as I was sitting alone with the good old man, my second father, he addressed me with uncommon seriousness, urging me to tell him the plans which I had formed for my future life. Struck with the suddenness of a question upon which I had scarcely deliberated, I hesitated to reply. 'I have not,' said I after some recollection, 'as yet formed any determined resolution; probably from not being impelled to it by necessity. You know the success of my father's industry. The fruits of it he has left to me; and finding myself possessed of a more than affluent fortune, a fair hereditary name, youth, health, an active mind, and one of the best of friends, I seem to have little care in life but to enjoy its blessings.' — 'But how securely to enjoy those blessings,' said my instructor, 'is the question. You doubtless wish to be happy, and believe the means to be in your power; but recall the scenes which we have observed together in the metropolis. How many are there in possession of the very blessings which you boast of, and who are yet discontented and miserable! That happiness which is in the power of so many, why is it not enjoyed? or, rather, in what does it consist? Recollect, and tell me who you do believe to be the happiest man you know?' I readily replied, 'Of all men I have ever seen, you appear to be the happiest, and yet I cannot precisely tell the reason why I think so: you are not young; you do not possess any visible means of wealth; your way of life precludes you from all the gratifications of public admiration: and yet the unalterable serenity of your countenance, and the cheerfulness of your manner, convince me that you are happy. Perhaps it is to your superior knowledge and philosophy that you owe your felicity. The confidence which you are now

showing me, however, encourages me to speak my whole mind. From several circumstances which have occurred since we were first acquainted, and from some accidental expressions which have dropped from you at different times, I conceived the notion that you were master of some extraordinary secret; but I have hitherto repressed my curiosity on this subject, as I did not think it became me to penetrate further into your confidence than you condescended to admit me.' — 'You have,' said he, casting upon me a look of approbation, 'fully invited my confidence, and it shall be no longer withheld. It is true, I am in possession of an extraordinary secret, — a secret I deem invaluable. It has been the purchase of many years' toil and experience, the reward of the reflection and the studies of a long life. I am a native of Italy, and my life has been spent chiefly in travelling through different countries. There is no part of the globe which I have not visited; having uniformly kept one object in view, to which, thank Heaven! I have at last attained. You know,' continued he, 'my friendship to your father, and my particular attachment to you. I wish to give you some proof of my regard, before Nature calls me from you; and I think I have it in my power to leave you a gift truly worthy of your acceptance.' There he paused.

"He drew carefully from beneath his vestment a small tube, of a substance which I had never before seen: it enclosed something which I concluded was a talisman. The old man put it into my hands: upon a nearer view, it appeared to me nothing more than a small instrument, constructed like one of our common thermometers, and marked into a great number of divisions. After I had examined it in silence for some time, my friend took it from me, and placed it near the region of my heart, — when instantly a fresh phenomenon appeared: a multitude of new divisions became visible. 'There are many

more,' said my friend, observing my astonishment: 'there are many more too nice to be discerned by the unassisted eye of man; but, the longer and more attentively you regard them, the more you will be enabled to discover.' — 'But what is this liquor?' said I; 'or is it a liquor which seems to move up and down in the tube? and what are those small characters which I perceive at the top and bottom of the instrument?' — 'The bright characters which you see at the top of the crystal are Arabic,' said he, 'and they signify *perfect felicity;* the degrees which you perceive marked upon the crystal form a scale of happiness descending from perfect felicity to indifference, which is the boundary between pleasure and pain; and from that point commence the dark divisions of misery, which continue deepening in their shade as they descend, and increasing in distance from each other, till they touch the characters at the bottom, which signify the final bounds of human misery and *despair.* The liquor which you see contained in the tube,' continued he, 'is endued with the power of rising and falling in the crystal, in exact proportion to the pleasure felt by the person who wears it at any given period of his existence.' I cast my eye down the tube as he held it in his hand. 'Perfect felicity and despair,' I repeated, and sighed: 'how many of my fellow-creatures are doomed to feel the one, how few attain the other!' — 'These extreme points,' said the good old man, recalling my eyes to the tube, 'though apparently so far distant from each other, are equally dangerous. It will seldom, however, be found actually at these extremes, and the intermediate degrees it defines with unerring precision.' — 'But,' said I, 'is it not enough for me to feel pleasure, to be convinced I feel it? and will not a little reflection ascertain the degree with sufficient accuracy?' — 'Perhaps not,' said he, smiling at my presumption: 'perhaps not so readily as you ima-

gine. The want of precision in this circumstance is one of the first causes of the mistakes which mankind fall into in their pursuits, especially the young and enthusiastic: reflecting little on the past, and forming great expectations for the future, they seldom rightly value their present sensations; guided by the opinion or the example of others, they mistake the real objects of happiness; and the experiments necessary to be tried, to set them right, must be so often repeated to make useful impressions, that life itself passes away before they are convinced of their error, or before the conviction has been of material advantage to them. Now, such is the nature of this little instrument, that, if you wear it next your heart, it will invariably preserve its efficacy in all the situations of life, — in the most tumultuous assembly, as well as in the most tranquil solitude; at the moment when your soul is the most agitated, when your emotions are the most complicated, when you would not or could not enter into any strict scrutiny of your own heart, this little crystal will be your monitor. Press it to your bosom, and ask yourself this question: "What degree of pleasure or of pain do I now feel?" The answer you will find distinct and decided. The liquor in the tube will instantaneously point it out upon the scale of happiness or misery: it will remain stationary until you unlock the chain from around your neck, in your hours of retirement.'

"Now I began to comprehend the true use and value of this present; and, retracting my hasty judgment, I expressed, in the warmest terms, my acknowledgment. 'Take it, my son,' said he, putting it into my hands. 'May you, in the course of your life, experience its utility as much as I have done; may it facilitate your improvement in virtue and wisdom, the only genuine sources of happiness. My life must now be near its close; my habits are fixed, and I have no further occa-

sion for this monitor: yet it has been so long my constant companion, that I can scarcely part with it, even to you, without reluctance. Promise me, however,' added he, 'to send me frequent and accurate accounts of the experiments you try with it: they will be an amusement to me in my retirement.'

"I readily made my friend the promise which he required; and, having again thanked him for his present, I eagerly clasped the golden chain around my neck, and resolved to begin, as soon as possible, a series of observations. It happened, however, that, the evening on which I had intended to commence these, I was visited by one of the most celebrated metaphysicians of that day, a friend of my father: to him I communicated the secret I had in my possession, and showed him my treasures. Envy flashed in his eyes: he pressed my thermometer to his heart. Instantly the liquor rose almost to the point of perfect felicity; then, fluttering, alternated between that and despair. 'Could I but possess this instrument for one month,' cried he, 'I could solve problems the most interesting to metaphysicians, and I could perfect my theory of the human mind.'

"Friendship, philanthropy, and, to own the truth, some degree of curiosity to see how the liquor would rise in the tube if I should comply with his desire, decided my answer. 'Your wish is granted,' said I; and at that instant the liquor rose to the point of *perfect felicity*, with such violence that the tube broke with a sudden explosion; and I, and the world, and the metaphysicians were deprived forever of our intended experiments on the Mental Thermometer."

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